



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Starting fine, showers later

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AND THE PRICE
OF FAME**

IN THE TABLOID

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Now's the day, now's the hour

Polls predict a Home Rule win

Stephen Goodwin

Scotland stands poised to take its destiny in its own hands today and vote for Home Rule. The fippan remark 290 years ago by the Earl of Seafield as the Union ended Scotland's last parliament, that "there's an end to an auld sang" is about to be confounded.

Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, was yesterday sufficiently confident of victory to stand with his temporary allies, the SNP and Liberal Democrats and cut a "Double Yes" cake.

The "wedding cake" gesture and the atmosphere of the final appearance by the Scottish party leaders after a 100-hour campaign blitz was almost triumphant. Glowing endorsements in the Scottish press and favourable opinion polls had all but erased jitters about securing a clear mandate for a Parliament in today's referendum.

seemed Mr Dewar's only real worry.

The Tory-dominated Think Twice campaign all but conceded defeat in an ill-tempered final press conference. Its chairman, Donald Findlay, accused the Scottish media of waging "propaganda war" on behalf of the pro-devolutionists. Reporting of the campaign had been a disgrace, he said.

The former Tory minister Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, the only politician of note to take an active role in Think Twice, sounded equally bitter, protesting at the "intolerance" of the Home Rule parties, particularly the Labour Party. The way figures such as Sir Bruce Patullo, Governor of the Bank of Scotland, had been excluded from the debate should make people think twice about the new style of democracy being offered, Lord Fraser suggested.

Sir Bruce was the most prominent member of the financial community to voice fears about the effect of devolution on Scotland's economy. However, the "No" campaigners appear to have made little headway, even over the possibility of tax increases for Scots - the area regarded as the Achilles' heel of the referendum.

An ICM poll for the Scotsman yesterday showed 49 per cent of voters believed the Parliament should have tax-varying powers, compared with 40 per cent against, hardly a ringing endorsement but not greatly different to before the campaign began. Support for the Parliament itself is running at comfortable three-to-one in favour.

Tory Blair urged Scots to "go for it" and take responsibility for their own affairs. During the 100-hour campaign - truncated by the week of mourning for Diana, Princess of Wales - Mr Blair has concentrated on instilling confidence into the Scots to take charge of their own affairs.



Flying the flag: A supporter of devolution flying the Scottish Saltire in Edinburgh yesterday on the eve of today's referendum

Photograph: Ian Ward/Reuters

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Mr Dewar was still warning against complacency causing a low turnout. "The terrible tragedy would be if people were to wake up on Friday morning and find that someone had stolen their 'jeely piece' [jam sandwich]," he said. But disinterest among the electorate, rather than any impact by the "No" campaigners

"To trust themselves. To have confidence in their future and vote for a new and modern settlement for Scotland that allows the Scottish people to take decisions closer to them, closer to their own priorities."

"They know they have got the assurance from the Labour Party on the tax-varying powers for

Scotland that we will not raise income tax for five years," the Prime Minister said.

Extraordinarily, Scots in radio phone-ins and vox pops have been doubting whether 129 politicians of good calibre could be found to fill the Edinburgh Parliament. But the message from the Prime Minister and Mr

Dewar for Scots to trust themselves has taken root.

Mr Dewar, who may well be not just the John the Baptist of the Scottish Parliament but become its First Minister, portrayed the coalition for Home Rule as part of the new style of politics he hopes emerge in Edinburgh.

"What is on offer is direct democratic control over a large area of Scotland's domestic affairs... that is a great improvement on what is at the moment a rather shop-soiled state of affairs," he said.

Cutting the cake with Mr Dewar was Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party,

clearly delighted that what he regards as the first step to independence is about to be taken, and Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats.

The Treasury would, reportedly, shed few tears if there was a "No" vote on tax powers. If it was combined with a low overall turnout, there would be

pressure on the Government to rethink the whole devolution exercise.

However, that looks unlikely to be the outcome and Scots are set to seize their new destiny 700 years to the day after William "Braveheart" Wallace defeated the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

'Attitudes have changed,' says the first woman minister to come out

Suzanne Moore

Angela Eagle, a junior environment minister and MP for Wallasey, has become the first senior politician to come out as a lesbian.

In an exclusive interview with *The Independent* she said: "I have a long-term and very happy relationship... I happen to be with a woman."

At the first woman politician at this level to come out as gay, Ms Eagle felt that the time was right to be open about her relationship. She has received, she says, huge support both from her family and the leadership of the Labour party. "To be honest I didn't expect anything else. Attitudes have changed... I think people are a lot more sensible than we sometimes give them credit for."

"I think I've only been able to cope with that because I have

a very understanding family. My sister [Maria Eagle is Angela's twin and also an MP], my brother and my father, all of whom are heterosexual, have just always supported me."

When she was elected in 1992, Ms Eagle was the youngest member of the House and she and Maria are often mistaken for each other.

Her decision to come out now is for two reasons: to deal with it herself and "to get a handle on this job and make sure that I can do it properly. Now I am at the stage where I need to get things sorted so I can just concentrate on my work."

Seen by all her colleagues as an extremely hard-working and talented politician, at 36 already holding ministerial office, she talked about the pressures on MPs trying to maintain a balance between work and their personal lives. "Should politi-



Angela Eagle: 'I think people are a lot more sensible than we give them credit for'

cians be human beings? I say yes we should be. I'd rather be governed by human beings than perfect cardboard cut-outs."

Having always supported gay rights, Ms Eagle has no desire to become solely a spokes-

woman for gay causes, expressing the view that her sexuality is just one aspect of "What I'm about..."

Nor does she have any wish to drag her girlfriend to official engagements. "My partner is actually very busy with her own life," she says.

While other MPs are doubtless watching the reaction in order to judge whether they should be similarly honest, Ms Eagle says she has no idea about which other of the new intake of women MPs may also be gay. "I can't even put all the names to faces yet, let alone speculate about their sexuality."

She doesn't feel that coming out will be in any way a bar to promotion within the party. "I get no sense of that at all," she says, and she has decided that "the best option now is to just be open about it". She has, she says, been lucky in having a wonderfully supportive family. Coming out, she hopes, will mean that she is under less personal strain and can now just concentrate on getting on with the job she loves.

Interview, page 14

Union leaders help to break 'race' strike

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

One of Britain's biggest unions is working to break a threatened strike at Ford by lorry drivers determined to defend an allegedly racist recruitment system.

Leaders of truck fleet employees at Dagenham, Essex, the most powerful group of workers in the company, have decided to hold a strike ballot, which the Transport and General Workers' Union has vowed to undertake.

A walkout by the drivers who ferry parts between Ford's

plants would bring Ford's British operation to a halt within hours and cause other factories in Western Europe to shut within days.

The truck fleet workers are angry over an agreement between the union and management to introduce an independent element into the selection procedure for their £30,000-a-year jobs. The system is due to be introduced next Monday.

While the proportion of ethnic minority workers in the main factories at Dagenham is between 40 and 50 per cent, the proportion in the truck fleet is

around two per cent.

The Independent understands that with the knowledge and agreement of the union, management has asked the transport company TNT to deliver the essential parts if there is industrial action. Speaking at the TUC's Congress in Brighton, Bob Purkiss, National Officer for Equality in the TGWU, said the union would cooperate with the company's long-cherished aim of contracting out its transport operation.

The 300 drivers involved have left the 900,000-strong TGWU and joined the 15,000-

member United Road Transport Union. Mr Purkiss said that the TGWU was not prepared to tolerate highly-damaging disruption. "We have bent over backwards to allow people to come to terms with the change, but it seems they are not prepared to do so."

Union convenors from most of the main Ford plants in Britain were last night attempting to persuade drivers' representatives to think again. David Higginbottom, of the smaller union, said the transport union generally had a low percentage of employees from ethnic minorities.



QUICKLY

Ritz may face charges

Criminal action for negligence may be taken against the Ritz hotel in Paris following confirmation that Henri Paul, the driver of the car in which Diana, Princess of Wales died, had taken two anti-depressant prescription drugs, as well as a large amount of alcohol. Page 3

Albright's firm stance

Madeleine Albright told Palestinians to take firm action against terrorism and Israel to stick to peace deals on the first day of her visit to the Middle East. Page 11

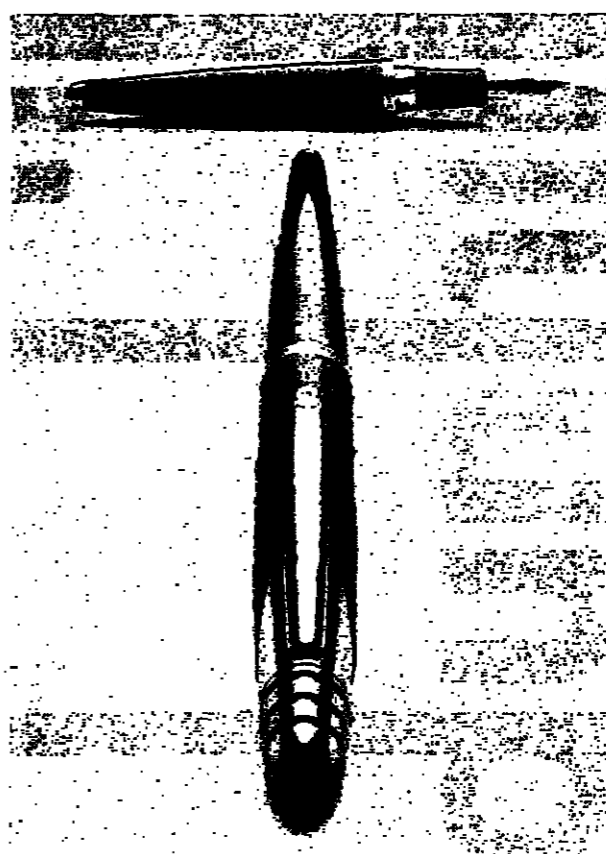
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news

significant shorts

Blunkett gives parents red light to complain

Parents should be able to ring the Department for Education to complain about their children's schools, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education said yesterday. His suggestion, made at the second of seven regional conferences on the Government's schools White Paper, was immediately attacked by headteachers as "extremely unhelpful and dangerous".

Mr Blunkett said outside the London conference that he was looking at ways in which parents could contact his department's standards and effectiveness unit if they were concerned about schools. But David Hart, of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "It is wholly wrong to encourage parents to complain to government departments when there are perfectly well-established procedures at local level."

Judith Judd

Burke survives hairy inquisition



Ireland's foreign minister Ray Burke, who is leading Dublin's team in next week's Northern Ireland talks has survived a Dail grilling on why he was paid £30,000 in cash from a builder during the 1989 general election.

Mr Burke (left) said "no strings were attached" to the gift, but evaded Opposition inquiries on whether he took other large contributions eight years ago. His survival is critical for the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, whose judgement in appointing him in June after a private Fianna Fail party inquiry into the gift was also on trial.

Alan Murdoch

Rugby star cleared of sex assault

The former England rugby star John Hall, who was capped 21 times for his country, was accused of pushing his hand down the 34-year-old woman's trousers and touching her bottom during a celebration night out. A jury at Bristol Crown Court took just 35 minutes to clear him of indecent assault.

Royal Academy denies Hirst claims

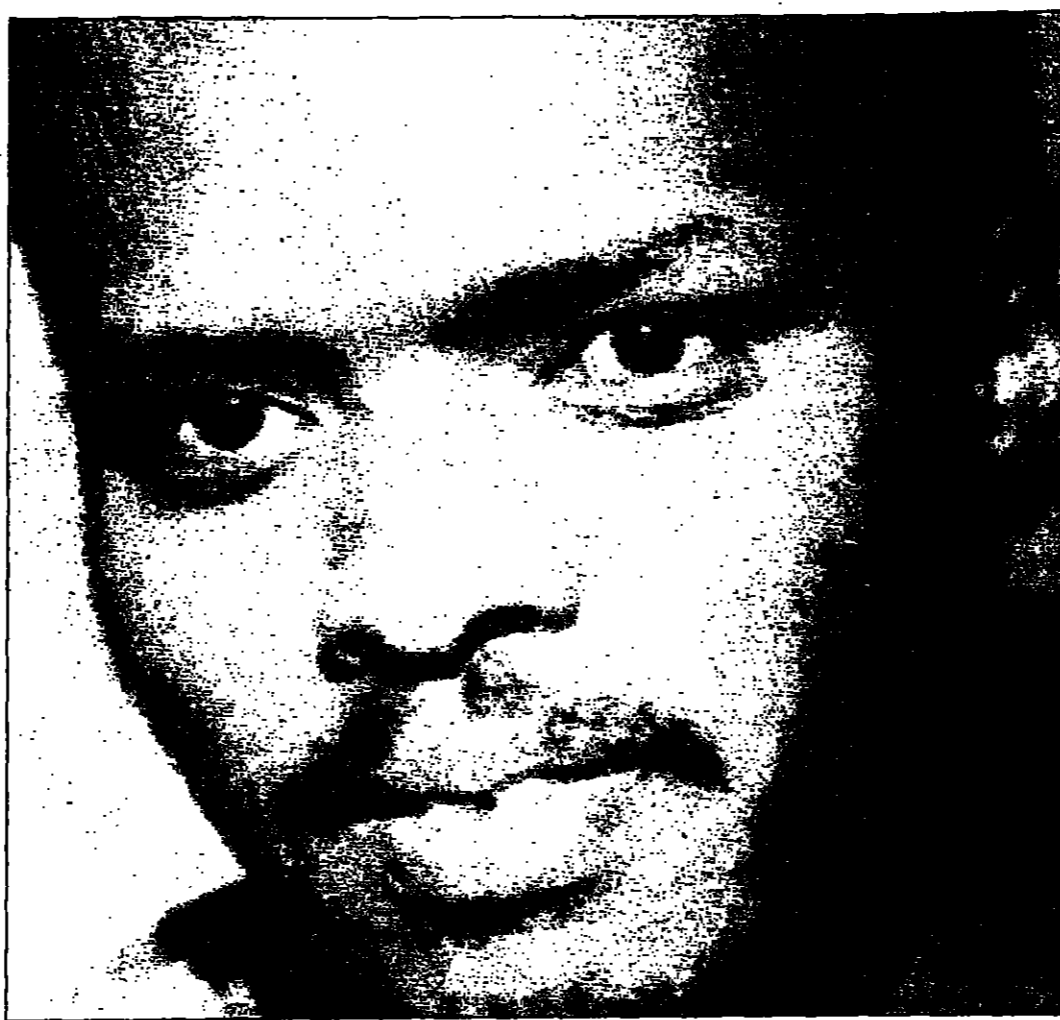
The Royal Academy last night denied ever offering membership to the artist Damien Hirst who had claimed he turned it down denouncing the august body as a "big, fat, stuffy institution". A spokesman for the RA, whose latest show, *Sensation*, opens next week and will include some works by Hirst, 33 said: "He has not been offered a Royal Academicianship either informally or formally by anyone at the Royal Academy."

Kim Sengupta

Connoisseur puts wine cellar on sale

The world's largest private wine cellar is to go under the hammer at Christie's in London. The 19,000 bottles are expected to raise £5m at the sale on 18 and 19 September.

people



Freedom warrior: Steve Biko, whose killing prompted an international outrage against the South African regime, 'went wild' in custody, according to former Major Harold Snyman

Apartheid enforcer sticks to 'farcical' story on Biko killing

Twenty years after the death in detention of black consciousness leader Steve Biko, five former security policemen yesterday asked the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for amnesty for killing him.

In a hushed and packed hall in a Port Elizabeth township, former major Harold Snyman, 69, who led the final interrogation of one of the anti-apartheid struggle's greatest sons, admitted the policemen had lied to a 1977 inquest into Biko's death, which concluded the death was accidental.

Mr Snyman said that after receiving head injuries during questioning, Biko, naked and sleep-deprived, did not receive immediate medical help as had been claimed. Though Biko collapsed and his speech was slurred, officers shackled him by his hands and feet in standing position to a metal grille where he remained for an entire day "to break down his resistance".

It was another day before he received medical treatment. Even when surgeon Ivor Lang finally examined him he decided Biko was shamming and sent him to his cell. Three days later Biko was found lying on the floor frothing at the mouth. He was then flung in the back of a police Land Rover, still naked and in chains, for a 700-mile trip from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria Prison Hospital where he died on 12 September of brain damage.

But despite yesterday's testimony, Mr Snyman stuck in essence to his incredible inquest story. Steve Biko died because five white security policemen had to fight to defend themselves against one black activist who "went wild" because he did not want to stand for questioning.

Yesterday, lawyer George Bizos, who represented Biko's family at the 1970s inquest - condemned as a state-sanctioned whitewash - said the policemen were still not making full disclosure and that their actions were not politically motivated. The men need to establish both to be granted amnesty by the TRC, the independent body

which is working to expose apartheid-era atrocities by offering indemnity in exchange for truth.

Donald Woods, the South African journalist who befriended Biko and was a central character in *Cry Freedom*, Sir Richard Attenborough's 1987 cinematic tribute to the black consciousness leader, said yesterday that if the police officers stuck to the inquest line "it would be a farce". Gideon Nieuwoudt, former police sergeant and convicted murderer who is also applying for amnesty for Biko's death, has already been accused this week of making a mockery of the truth and reconciliation process. The former activist, Mkhulisi Jack, says that while he will not oppose Nieuwoudt's application for torturing him, Nieuwoudt's claim that it only happened once is a blatant lie.

The Biko family has opposed any amnesty, saying the families of other murdered activists challenged the constitutionality of the TRC in the country's highest court. They argued that the Commission, a foundation for South Africa's transition to black majority rule, was a vehicle for political expediency and robbed them of their right to justice. Once amnesty is granted all civil and criminal action against perpetrators is ruled out.

Even the TRC's staunchest supporters understand the anger of families like the Bikos. In September 1977, while Mrs Biko struggled with her loss, National Party minister Jimmy Kruger was entertaining an NP congress with jokes about Biko's death. The delegates split their sides when he said South Africa was so democratic that prisoners had the democratic right to starve themselves to death.

The amnesty applications of Mr Snyman, Mr Nieuwoudt and former captain Daniel Siebert and warrant officers Jacobus Bencke and Rubin Marx continue today.

Jill Dando switches channels to present music awards

The TV personality, Jill Dando, is to present The Gramophone Awards on ITV, the first time in their 20-year history that the premier classical music awards have been given their own television show. Dando, who is a BBC presenter, had to be given special permission to be allowed to appear on the show on 28 October, which is being mounted by Carlton Television. While The Brits and the Mercury Music Prize receive prime time TV coverage, this will be the first time that classical music gets a glitzy TV awards show. The ceremony itself will be at London's Alexandra Palace on Monday 27 October, and Luciano Pavarotti will be making a guest appearance.

Chris Pollard, editorial director of Gramophone Magazine said: "We are delighted that at last the awards will be gaining a mass audience. ITV has recognised the broadcast potential of this event and its coverage will give a major boost to the classical music industry. The broadcast will give fans a chance to see their musical heroes and also introduce them to a whole new audience. I really feel that a lot of pre-conceptions about the world of classical music and the artists that inhabit it will be altered on 28 October."

Former recipients of the Gramophone awards include Pavarotti, Camerata, Kiri Te Kanawa and Nigel Kennedy.



Surrogate child ruled an orphan

A California toddler, Jaycee Louisa Buzzanca, was conceived for cash by a surrogate mother using egg and sperm from donor banks. Now she has been ruled legally parentless after what an appeals court called the "most extraordinary" surrogacy case.

John and Luanna Buzzanca hired a surrogate mum in 1994 to carry Jaycee to term. But one month before the child was born, John Buzzanca filed for divorce. His lawyers argued that Jaycee was not a "child of the marriage" under existing family law. Orange County Judge Robert Monarch agreed.

He ruled Mr Buzzanca had no financial responsibility for two-year-old Jaycee. And while Mrs Buzzanca has custody of the child, Judge Monarch said she was "not entitled to be declared the legal mother at this time."

Science Museum buys Warhol's Old Sparky

An electric chair once owned by pop artist Andy Warhol yesterday sold at auction for £4,800. In a few minutes brisk and tense bidding, London's Science Museum secured the chair over an anonymous telephone bidder from California in the sale at Bristol Auction Rooms.

The all-steel chair was once owned by California's Department of Penal Correction. It was the main item in more than 30 lots of pop art memorabilia associated with Warhol. It had a guide price of £2,000-£4,000.

The 61-year-old chair was in the prison system, including the infamous Alcatraz, St Quentin and Chino. Its role was more of a visual deterrent than of lethal purpose.

Warner Bros used it as a film prop in the fifties. It featured in *Inside the Walls of Folsom Prison*, *Crime-wave*, and *Alfred Hitchcock's* *1 Con-*



fess. Warhol acquired it later and was said to have used it to watch horror films at home. His associate, Pietro Psaler, included it in a 1970s joint exhibition of their work when it was christened Rest in Peace: Pax. Two frock-coated characters from

the London Dungeon Museum of Horrors - Mr Death and his assistant - had hoped to bid for the chair, with their bidding card appropriately numbered 666.

But Mr Death - Peter Osborne, 29 - never got a bid in as his top price of £4,000 was the starting point for the bidding.

Science Museum curator, Neil Brown, said that it was hoped to exhibit the Warhol chair within six to ten months in the medical collection.

He said: "We understand it was used in at least one American institution for executions. It is part of history and the Science Museum deals not only with the nice things but the nasty bits as well. And the electric chair was certainly one of the nasty bits."

Some American states still rely on an electric chair for their executions.

briefing

MEDICINE

Genetic breakthrough could lead to cancer cure

American scientists said yesterday that a gene similar to one blamed for many types of cancer could open up a new way of attacking the killer disease.

William Kaelin Jr and researchers at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts examined the properties of "p73", a gene which is a close cousin to the tumour-suppressor gene p53, linked to more than 50 per cent of all cancer cases. When p53, the most important suppressor gene known, is mutated or not working, tumours can develop.

In a report in the scientific journal *Nature*, Mr Kaelin said that p73 can mimic the work of p53 - inducing cancer cells to die. "Our study shows that in principle there is actually another gene which is very similar to p53 and which could perform the functions normally performed by p53."

Mr Kaelin said that one of the reasons cancer cells don't die, and with a lot of genetic damage they should, is because they were smart enough to inactivate p53 which would ordinarily induce the damaged cells to commit suicide. "What our study shows is that when you activate this unknown 53 homologue, p73, it will likewise induce cancer to undergo cell death."

The discovery of what p73 could lead to the development of new drugs that would activate the expression of the p73 gene, which so far does not appear to be frequently mutated in human cancer.

"You may have a copy of the p53-like gene that is in a somewhat dormant state that could then be activated by a drug," Mr Kaelin said. "Our study shows that if you did induce the expression of p73 in a cancer cell you could reasonably expect that the cell would undergo cell suicide."

TRANSPORT

Call for user-friendly bus service

A green transport group yesterday called for "door-to-door bus services" as a way to cut car usage. A national public transport information service should also be set up, said Transport 2000. The group also said tickets should be valid on all public transport in every British city in a report entitled *Blueprint for Quality Public Transport*.

Transport 2000 said there were five major barriers to wider use of public transport. There was no public transport at all for the routes people wanted to travel. There was poor, or no, information about what services were available.

In addition, poor public transport was much slower than car travel; people with children, or disabilities, had trouble using public transport. There was also a general unwillingness to use it through ignorance or previous bad experiences, it was claimed.

The report called, among other things, for old rail lines to be reopened, more bus lanes, cheaper fares especially for groups and families and "train taxi" tickets which buy a taxi ride from rail stations to the traveller's home.

"People have been talking about an integrated public transport system for years. Now we've shown that it's possible and what it means in practice," said Transport 2000's director, Stephen Joseph. He went on: "Quality public transport will attract people out of their cars, especially if it's combined with other measures."

TECHNOLOGY

Hitler speaks from beyond the grave

Adolf Hitler and Winston Churchill's voices have been resurrected from rare recordings with the feather-light touch of an optical stylus invented by Swiss researchers.

The stylus, developed by Philippe Robert and colleagues at the Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, relies on a single optical fibre a thousand times lighter than a conventional diamond needle. It can now play ageing 78 rpm discs and cylinders that were too fragile or damaged to play.

Some cylinders were so delicate they could only be played once. The weight of the hard needle had also worn away the groove because the discs were too soft.

But Robert told *New Scientist*: "We have played many times soft wax discs which can usually only be played once or twice. We have listened to speeches by wartime leaders such as Churchill, Roosevelt and Hitler. We were particularly charmed by a broadcast by the then Princess Elizabeth made for the BBC on her 14th birthday."



CRIME

Britain tops vandalism league

British households suffer the worst problems of crime and vandalism in the European Union, according to a survey published yesterday.

One in three families said crime and vandalism were a problem in their area compared with an EU-wide average of just one in five. This was British households biggest complaint about where they live. Noise is the second most serious problem in Britain - cited by 22 per cent of households - followed by lack of space (21 per cent) and pollution (16 per cent).

Only Spain and France appear to face a similar problem with crime and vandalism, where a quarter of households complained about it. German and Greek households reported having the least trouble.

A fifth of British householders and a third of rent payers said they found it hard to pay the mortgage, taxes, heating and other housing costs.

Noise, from neighbours or the street, was the most common complaint across the EU - cited by 27 per cent of households - particularly in Spain, Italy and Germany.

Irish householders seem to be the most contented of all with complaints below average in every area.

But 6 per cent had no hot running water, 5 per cent had no bathroom or shower and 4 per cent no inside toilet - problems virtually wiped out in Britain where just 1 per cent have no bathroom or shower.

The findings are based on a survey of 60,500 households in 1994 covering the 12 countries which were members of the European Union at the time.

Frank

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Have children late and live longer

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

If you know somebody who has had a child after her 40th birthday, you may have met a future centenarian. Scientists have discovered that bearing a baby in the fifth decade of life is a strong indicator that a woman has anti-ageing genes which will help her reach the age of 100.

The result could lead towards the identification of the estimated 9,000-odd genes which slow down the natural process of ageing. It also provides support for research suggesting that hormone replacement therapy after the menopause will also help extend a woman's life.

According to an American study comparing a group of women born in 1896 who

reached 100 with others born in the same year who died aged 73, the centenarians were much more likely to have had a child in their forties than those who died at a "normal" age.

However, women seeking to live longer should not rush into their lover's arms (or the sperm bank). It is not the act of having a child after 40 which leads to a congratulatory royal telegram 60 years later. The key

factor is the genes that the child's mother was born with. Having the baby does not confer the genes.

For the women born in 1896, successfully bearing a child during a 10-year period which included the Second World War indicated that nature had endowed them with the ideal genetic makeup for a long life.

Thomas Perls, who carried

out the research at the gerontology division of the Harvard Medical School, said yesterday: "It helps the result that none of them would have had artificial oestrogen therapy, so we know what we're seeing was genetic."

The research, published today in the science journal *Nature*, adds to the confusing scientific literature which

debates whether it is the embryo or the mother's genes which

decide at what age - if at all - to have children. Previously, research has demonstrated that the younger a woman is when she has her first child, the less likely she is to develop breast cancer during her life. The effect may be due to the growth of the breasts during pregnancy.

Plentiful evidence also shows that the older the mother, the more likely it is the embryo will

suffer from a genetic defect such as Down's syndrome. That is thought to be because the eggs accumulate genetic damage.

Because the longer-lived women went through menopause later, the result suggests that the oestrogen their bodies produced also helped them survive longer, avoiding age-related diseases like Alzheimer's.

Dr Perls is now following up

the work by studying the children of the women from the research group, and also looking for families where there are two or more siblings aged over 90.

By comparing blood samples, he hopes to find long stretches of DNA which represent "the city in which the anti-ageing genes have their home". After that, he hopes to find the genes responsible - though it may be the work of a lifetime.



Frank and fearless: A heavily pregnant model wears the latest creations from designers Sonia Rykiel, Belle Aura and Ghost. Photograph: John Akehurst



Under-cover, up-front: The traditional image of Van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Marriage* contrasts sharply with the magazine's radical vision

Pregnant with meaning - or a slight on motherhood?

Jojo Moyes

The female form has been among the most celebrated images of our cultural heritage - as long as it isn't pregnant.

Ask anyone to list well-known depictions of pregnancy, and they will be lucky to come up with a handful. The stomach, swollen with child, is a rare sight in even "enlightened" 20th-century culture.

The film actress Demi Moore

caused a controversy when, heavily pregnant, she appeared nude on the cover of *Vanity Fair* magazine.

Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* unusually shows a Madonna heavily with child rather than Madonna and Child.

But these are rare examples; the National Gallery in London, for example, could not come up with a single artistic representation of pregnancy yesterday.

According to a spokes-

woman, the example most commonly believed to depict

impending motherhood - Van

Eyck's *The Arnolfini Marriage* -

showed nothing more than the

fashion for heavily gathered

high waistbands.

In an effort to combat this

ambivalence - or perhaps as an

effective sales gimmick - *Frank*,

a new "alternative" magazine

for women, decided to use

three heavily pregnant models

to illustrate a fashion shoot.

The feature, entitled "Eight-

and-a-half: It's a miracle, not a

dress size" shows the models'

stomachs protruding between

their clothes, bare flesh visible.

They could not be more different

from the demurely pregnant

women blooming between the

pages of mother-and-baby mag-

azines, or maternity catalogues.

But this alternative approach is not without controversy. *Frank*'s editor, Tina Gaudoin, said yesterday she was "dis-

gusted" by the fact that readers

- both men and women - had

contacted them to complain

about the images, one even

describing them as "grotesque".

"The modern woman doesn't

regard pregnancy as a different

state; a special state, perhaps,

but she still has to live her life.

So we wanted to integrate it into

the mainstream to illustrate

the fact that it's very beautiful

and to say you don't have to cov-

er it up," said Ms Gaudoin, her-

self a mother.

"When you think of the

things that can be reproduced

without men batting an eyelid

... that someone could call this

grotesque! Well, I don't care if

people find it offensive, be-

cause it's incredibly beautiful.

They should get used to it."

On *Frank*'s pages, they may

have to. Ms Gaudoin says that

expectant mothers will feature

again. "It won't be a regular fea-

ture, but these clothes aren't

pregnancy clothes, so there's no

reason why we wouldn't do

women in different states of

pregnancy," she said.

"An extremely high percent-

age of women get pregnant; it's

a state most of us go through.

If you can't see it openly in a

magazine then you have a prob-

lem. The fact that women

could complain about these

images I find incredibly sad."

The pregnant form, it seems,

still provokes equivocal feelings.

Two years ago, a schoolgirl

artist in Aberdeen caused a

storm when her painting of a

nude pregnant woman went on

public display, with female staff

demanding that it be taken

down.

Her headmaster said: "Opin-

ion was expressed that this

shouldn't be shown in the main

corridor of a school."

With an increasing number of

models and actresses now

proud to record their bumps on

celluloid, perhaps a new gen-

eration will find the images

less disturbing. As the sixth-

form artist said afterwards: "They

are so behind the times. I thought

their reaction was quite funny."

Charities fear impact of Diana memorial fund

Louise Jury

Some charities raised fears yesterday that they could be hit financially if members of the public simply divert their donations to the fund set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Action Research, a medical research charity for serious disabling diseases, was the first to plead for donations to the fund to be made in addition to existing charitable gifts.

Anne Luther, its director-general, said that at least one supporter, who runs the marthon, had already switched allegiance. It was clear that some who had previously pledged their support to Action Research wanted to redirect their funds to be associated with a suitable memorial to the work which Diana had accomplished.

But Mrs Luther said: "I cannot believe that it would have been Diana's wish that the charities she espoused should benefit at the expense of other good causes: rather that we should all be prepared to go the extra mile."

Action Research was not a charity with which Diana had been associated, but its work "underpins much of what the Princess chose to face so compassionately". It had cancelled fundraising events last Saturday "out of our deepest respect".

But, while the fears might prove groundless, Mrs Luther said that if several hundred people who traditionally gave £10 or £20 did not do so, that would be a problem.

Barry Brookings, chief executive of the Parkinson's Disease Society, which Diana support-

ed until her divorce, said Action Research had raised an important point and was brave to do so at such a sensitive time.

It was vital for charities like Parkinson's to maintain their income to be able to carry out their work. "There is a finite amount of money which is available to charities."

Details of the memorial fund were yet to be confirmed, although it seemed probable that the six charities of which Diana was patron would benefit, as well as perhaps the 100 or so more which she backed until her divorce. Mr Brookings said he could understand the fears of other charities. "This could mean there is less in the pot. But knowing Diana, she wouldn't want an imbalance."

Derek Boddell, of the National Aids Trust, one of the six

charities which the Princess continued to support, said it believed that the distribution of the fund would have to reflect the totality of her interests.

"It doesn't serve anyone's interests if so much money goes in one direction that other good causes and charitable activities, not linked with Princess Diana, suffer."

Tony Manwaring, from NCH Action for Children, said: "For now, it's important that the public continue to give. The resounding popular response to Diana's charitable works is clearly a restatement of the values of helping charities."

Lindsay Rose, of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations, said: "We would encourage people to continue in their normal course of giving in addition to this fund."

Ritz faces negligence charge over death crash driver

John Lichfield
Paris

Criminal action for negligence may be taken against the Ritz hotel in Paris following confirmation that Diana, Princess of Wales, was driven to her death by a man who had consumed large quantities of drink and two mind-calming prescription drugs.

Henri Paul, 41, deputy head of security at the Ritz, had more than three times the legal level of alcohol in his blood, according to new tests, including a full-scale test suggested by a British pathologist retained by the Fayed family.

Mr Paul had also taken a substantial dose of Prozac, the anti-depressant drug, and a small amount of Tripridol, a

drug sometimes prescribed to calm people who have taken excessive amounts of alcohol.

Medical experts disagreed yesterday on whether this added up to a dangerous cocktail which might, in itself, have led Mr Paul to lose control of the car before it crashed into the concrete pillar of the Paris road tunnel. But they agreed that the quantity of alcohol involved - equivalent to at least a bottle of wine - was enough alone to cloud his judgement and damage his peripheral vision.

Sources close to the criminal investigation of the accident, which also killed Mr Paul and Diana's companion, Dodi Fayed, told the French press yesterday that Mr Paul's condition was now regarded as the principal cause of the crash. They

said investigation would continue into the contributing role of the paparazzi photographers, who had been pursuing the Princess's party on motorcycles. Nine photographers and a motorbike dispatch rider face possible charges of manslaughter, recklessly causing injury and failing to assist persons in danger.

But the sources also told *Le Figaro* and *Agence France Press* that the two investigating magistrates leading the inquiry were considering legal proceedings against Mr Paul's employers, the Ritz hotel.

The sources said senior managers at the Ritz - owned by Dodi's father, Mohammed Al Fayed - could be placed under formal examination for "negligence" and "placing lives in danger".

Such a legal action might be justified, the sources said, on two counts: that the hotel should have been aware of Mr Paul's physical condition; and that it should have known that he did not hold the special licence needed to drive a large, powerful limousine in Paris. Thirty detectives are still working on the case; over 100 witnesses have been interviewed, including 30 people who were at the Ritz before Diana's party left.

Le Parisien newspaper yesterday reported that Diana had said a few words to emergency workers while trapped in the car a few minutes after the accident.

Unnamed sources in the Paris emergency services told the newspaper that Diana had said, several times: "Oh my God and 'Leave me alone'."

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US suspends deportation of IRA activists

David Usborne
New York
David McKitterick
Belfast

In a highly unusual departure from its own rules, the United States government has suspended deportation proceedings against six Irish nationalists previously imprisoned for terrorist activities connected with the IRA.

The move, which could come back to haunt Washington in dealing with immigrants from other countries like Mexico, was portrayed by officials as a gesture towards assisting the Northern Ireland peace process. The six, all of whom have completed their prison terms, were facing deportation back to the UK or Ireland because of misleading statements made to immigration officials on taking up residence in the US. Specifically, they failed to own up to their past criminal convictions.

While the Attorney General, Janet Reno, issued the instruction for the cases to be dropped, the impetus for it came from the Secretary of State, Madeleine

Albright. In a statement, Ms Albright said she hoped the move would advance the goal of "a lasting, overall settlement in Northern Ireland".

On his recent visit to Washington, Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin leader, is believed to have raised the cases of the six men with the US government. Sinn Féin also sought assurances from the US on the issue even earlier when the IRA was considering a renewed ceasefire.

British officials meanwhile underscored that the move would have no bearing on extradition cases against three IRA fugitives currently pending in San Francisco. These, they said, were governed by international extradition treaties, not by domestic laws.

The decision prompted a news conference by 14 members of the US Congress at which Joe Kennedy, of Massachusetts, said the six never considered themselves as criminals. "It was, in fact, politics, not criminality," that led to their imprisonment, he said.

There was jubilation, meanwhile, for the six involved, five

of whom live in New York City area. They are Robert McEneaney, Matthew Morrison, Gabriel Megaw, Brian Pearson, Noel Gaynor and Gerald McDade. "I think it's fantastic," Mr Pearson said. "It's a step by the Administration in the right direction of what's happening in Northern Ireland."

The move was welcomed by the Dublin government, which described it as "further evidence of confidence-building measures," but was condemned by Unionist politicians.

Ulster Unionist security spokesman Ken Maginnis MP said: "It would be a very naive individual who did not see this as part of a trilateral conspiracy between three governments who are determined to pay whatever price it takes to ensure that the IRA comes to the conference table."

Democratic Unionist MP Peter Robinson declared: "The irony of this latest sop to IRA terrorists stands out in stark contrast to the United States' attitude to its own terrorists. For them the electric chair or life imprisonment awaits."

Unionists are split over seat at peace table

David McKitterick, Ireland correspondent

The Unionist population may be split down the middle on the question of whether the leader of the Ulster Unionist party, David Trimble, should sit at the table with Sinn Féin when talks open in Belfast on Monday.

A poll carried out by BBC Northern Ireland's *News at Ten* television programme found that just over 50 per cent of Unionists wanted their leaders to negotiate face to face with Sinn Féin. Just under 50 per cent were against.

Mr Trimble yesterday met

Tony Blair in Downing Street, apparently seeking last-minute concessions which might ease his party's dilemma over the talks. The poll indicates how delicate the Ulster Unionist party's position is as it contemplates whether to go into negotiations.

Mr Trimble was unwilling to comment later on whether his party was now likely to take part in the talks. "We stressed to him the need for the Government to act against the situation where over recent weeks we have seen what could be called a tidal wave of republican triumphalism," he said.

The discussion had focussed on the need for confidence-building measures to reassure the Unionist community that there would be due regard to "basic democratic principles and the objective of ensuring genuine peace," he added.

The government has circulated the names of a number of people who may make up the international commission on arms decommissioning which will be part of the talks process. Among the possibilities are Donald Johnston, former American ambassador to Mongolia and Jack Dangerfield, a retired Canadian general.



Classic comedy: Spike Milligan yesterday. Photograph: David Rose. Top right: Bentham, Secombe, Milligan, and Sellers recording 'Crazy People' in 1951. Photograph: Hulton Getty



25 years on, the Goons are back

Amanda Kelly

Twenty five years after the last *Goon Show* was made, a new generation of listeners is being given the chance to familiarise itself with a comedy legend.

Spike Milligan, Sir Harry Secombe and Peter Sellers were last reunited in 1972 as part of the BBC's 50th anniversary celebrations. The trio got together for *The Last Goon Show Of All*, a live performance recorded for radio at the Camden Theatre in London.

Next month, Radio 2 is marking the occasion by broadcasting a new version of the *Goon* finale, which will include material cut from the original performance. Milligan's version of *I Left My Heart In San Francisco*, the publishers of which prevented its broadcast 25 years ago, will be heard for the first time.

The show will be preceded by a history of the programme entitled *It's All The Go-On Show*, featuring Milligan, Secombe, Eric Sykes and the late Michael Bentine. This will include some seldom-heard recordings and a feature on the first *Goon* show, *Crazy People*, made 46 years ago.

Yesterday at the project's launch, the two surviving Goons proved they had lost none of their touch. Milligan, close to his 80th birthday, looked frail but retained his mischievous twinkle. When told that his friend

John Cleese was unable to make the event, he retorted: "John Cleese is a miserable bastard. He is never able to make it." And when presented with a framed tribute to the show, Sir Harry responded graciously: "Oh that'll fit in the loo nicely."

Speaking at the launch, Radio 2 controller James Moir said: "The *Goon Show* used to be the black sheep programme of the BBC. Now it is the golden fleece."

"It had a profound and lasting effect on me. As a schoolboy back in the Fifties I thought it quite simply the funniest thing I had ever heard. Forty years on it still bends me double with laughter."

Prince Charles, a well-known fan of Goonism, once said: "No matter how much 'fashion' in humour changes, there will always be thousands of people whose minds are attuned to the kind of mental slapstick and imaginary cartoonery that typifies Goonery... It has always been one of my profound regrets that I was not born 10 years earlier than 1948, since I would then have had the pure unadorned joy of listening avidly to the Goons each week."

At Last The Go-On Show and *The Last Goon Show Of All* will be broadcast as a double bill on BBC Radio 2 on 5 October. A special 25th anniversary edition video and audio cassette is also going on sale.

Patter of mice fails to stop Savoy winning top award



Tip-top: Staff at work in the kitchens of The Savoy yesterday

Photograph: John Voss

Clare Garner

Presumably none of the business travellers who nominated The Savoy the best hotel in the world had had the pleasure of meeting a mouse during dinner.

The very same hotel which only last month hit the headlines because rodents were on the loose in the famous River Thames Restaurant and adjacent Restaurant Foyer, prompting a visit from Westminster Council's environmental health officers, yesterday scooped the *Executive Travel* magazine's top award: Hotel of the Year.

For the first time in 15 years, the annual readers' poll by the magazine produced a Western winner. Previously, Asian establishments have wiped the board, but this year the Savoy, which is wedged between the Embankment and the Strand in the heart of London's theatre-land, came up trumps. Not only did it take the top title, but it was also voted best UK hotel

and best in the UK for rooms and for food.

The Savoy, the brainchild of the Gilbert and Sullivan impresario Richard D'Oyle Carte, first opened its doors to the public in 1889. It boasted unheard of features including full electric lighting and a startling number of baths (67 in total). Over the years, the hotel has had numerous expansions, most recently the renovation which famously disturbed the mice and has entertained almost every star in the book.

Of the many glittering parties that have been held at The Savoy, one of the most famous is the Gondola dinner, hosted by George Kesler, the Champagne millionaire and Wall Street financier, in July 1905. The old forecourt was recreated as Venice, lit by 400 Venetian lamps. Other highlights were a baby elephant and a five-foot birthday cake.

Royalty has allegedly patronised The Savoy in such num-

bers that the special bell heralding their arrival had to be abandoned. By 1914, The Savoy Grill had established itself as a rendezvous for leading stars, impresarios and critics. Sir Winston Churchill was what the hotel calls "a devoted Savoyard", visiting every week when he was in London.

Guests yesterday gave the hotel a resounding endorsement. Hugh Winthrop, 58, managing director of an advertising agency, said The Savoy was "a great meeting place" as he took another slug of his bloody mary while waiting for his companion. "The girls like it," he added. "I think women like it because it's not too pushy, you know. You feel safe. You could leave your wife here for an hour if you were delayed... I don't think I've got a complaint really."

Timothy Harris, a solicitor-entertaining colleagues, summed up the hotel, which is part of The Savoy Group, which includes The Berkeley, Clar-

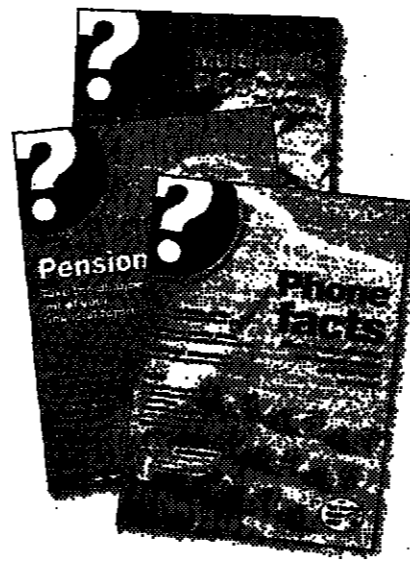
idge's and The Connaught in London and The Lygon Arms in the Cotswolds. "The service is very good, the food's excellent, the wine's expensive... It's a special place that I come to on special occasions."

The Savoy was not the only London hotel to be singled out in the award ceremony at the Sheraton, in Park Lane. The Metropolitan took the world best new hotel title, beating off challenges from Bangkok and Beverly Hills establishments.

"It is refreshing to see London hotels not merely matching but exceeding the high standards which have been set by Asian hotels in recent years," said Mike Ilynke, editor of *Executive Travel*.

The Sheraton Skyline at Heathrow was voted the UK's best airport hotel and another Heathrow hotel, the Ramada, was voted best UK conference hotel. The magazine's readers voted ITT Sheraton the best hotel group.

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news

Earthly power brought Jericho down



British Association's Festival of Science

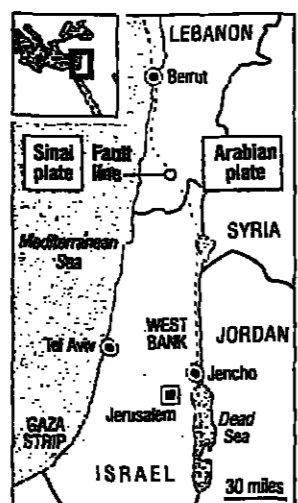
Charles Arthur
Science Editor

The walls of Jericho fell not because of trumpet-playing inspired by the heavens, but by events beneath the ground, according to geologists who have pinned the calamity on an earthquake.

Now, the same unstable fault-line which demolished the Biblical city threatens the modern city of Beirut, which is hurriedly rebuilding itself after years of civil war. Dr Rob Butler of the University of Leeds told the British Association yesterday.

Excavations of ancient ruins in Israel and the Middle East over the past 20 years have established that a succession of cities there were destroyed by earthquakes, including Jericho, and then in 551 AD the Roman city which stood where Beirut does now.

"That was devastated either by an earthquake or a tsunami [the seawave caused by an undersea earthquake]," said Dr



Butler. "The Roman columns collapsed and became the lower base on which the new town was built. Of course, columns are the worst thing to use for buildings in earthquake zones."

He also warned that "Beirut lies on a major active fault" and that the government of Lebanon is not taking enough care to build structures able to stand a devastating earthquake — which he reckons is inevitable. "It may not be as high a risk



Fault line: How Biblical scholars see the destruction of Jericho (top). Seismologists, however, believe the rebuilding of Beirut (above) could be ruined by an earthquake

as California or Tokyo, which are both in major earthquake zones. But they are building for that eventually, whereas Lebanon is not," he said. The fault-line is caused by a complex interaction of tectonic

plates beneath the Earth's surface. It runs north from the Gulf of Arabia through the Dead Sea and up to the Mediterranean Sea. "Basically, the Red Sea is opening up, pushing Arabia northwards re-

lative to Africa," Dr Butler explained. At the points where the plates meet, they slide past each other — but not smoothly. When thousands of miles of opposing rock edges suddenly

inch past each other, the resulting release of energy is felt as an earthquake.

At Easter, Beirut was rocked by a quake measuring 5 on the Richter scale. "They need to tighten up the building code —

much of the rebuilding is on land reclaimed from the Mediterranean, with bulldozed rubble from the war zone. In an earthquake, unconsolidated ground can flow like liquid."

Spending a few million pounds on installing instruments to measure where smaller shocks occur would also help, he said. "Compared to the amount being raised on the stock market for rebuilding, it's a drop in a bucket."

When promiscuity can be a man's best endowment policy

Nicholas Schoon

It is a matter of scientific fact that promiscuous men have larger testicles. An eight-year study of Manchester University students, young and old, showed those with bigger gonads had sex more often, were more likely to be unfaithful to their long-term partner and had higher sperm counts.

Conversely, men with smaller testicles "spend much more time with their partners and make it difficult for them to be unfaithful," said zoologist Dr Robin Baker.

Dr Baker, who headed the study of 80 men aged between 18 and 50, says these findings suggest men are genetically dis-

posed towards one of two sexual strategies thrown up by millions of years of evolution.

The well-endowed subconsciously incline towards promiscuity, while the little men lean — without ever recognising why — towards fidelity and staying close to their partners.

There are big differences in testicle size among the population. The largest in his survey,

measured using callipers, had a volume of 52 cubic centimetres (cc) compared with the smallest at 8cc. The average was 24cc, considerably less than the 40cc average found in a Danish study.

His investigation took so long because it was not easy to find a large enough number of volunteers willing to be studied. Apart from the indignity of being measured, they also had to

supply semen ejaculated in a condom during copulation. This was needed to measure their sperm count.

While his theory of two evolutionary strategies, big or small, swinger or faithful, may sound implausible, numerous studies on animals have demonstrated the evolution of all manner of different sexual strategies.

There is fierce competition

between males to be the first to get their sperm to fertilise eggs.

Dr Baker estimates that 4 per cent of conceptions of human children involve such sperm races, in which the sperm of either of two men could have reached the fertile egg first. The male seed remains viable inside the woman's body for up to five days. It is broadly accepted that about 10 per cent of children are

not related to the men who believe they are their fathers, suggesting that there is plenty of opportunity for such races.

Dr Baker also compared the sex lives of men with their degree of bilateral symmetry — how closely the right side of their body matched their left — and how attractive they were to women. Again, the more symmetrical men had more sexual

partners, more sex, and higher sperm counts during copulation.

There is a strong match between degree of symmetry and attractiveness to women, and a growing number of biologists believe that symmetry, and thus handsomeness, have an evolutionary meaning. Women, they theorise, subconsciously use it as a cue for the genetic fitness of prospective mates.

Cloning could be lifeline for threatened species

Charles Arthur

The cloning techniques which produced Dolly the sheep should be used to preserve and even rescue animal species on the brink of extinction, according to a conservation expert.

Dr William Holt of London Zoo's scientific arm, the Institute of Zoology, suggested yesterday that the cloning technique, which it was revealed in February has taken cells from an adult sheep and used them to produce an exact genetic copy, could be applied particularly to species which live in fragile habitats.

"If you could get the cloning technology working, then you could reconstruct the population," he said. As an example, he cited the Australian hairy-nosed wombat, which is found in New South Wales.

Fewer than 50 specimens are known to exist, confined to a small area. "It would only take a bush fire," he commented. "They could be wiped out overnight."

The furor over Dolly, which led to widespread arguments over whether it was morally justifiable and whether it should be allowed in humans, may have overshadowed useful aspects, Dr Holt suggested.



Carbon copy: Dolly may signal a new age in conservation

"The initial reaction to cloning is that there isn't any application to conservation. But that's not true."

A team in Japan is already trying to help a threatened species of ibis birds, where only two exist, by cloning technology which injects the ibis's cells into the embryo of a closely-related ibis species. As the embryo develops into a chimera — a mix of species — it can then be crossed again with cells from the rare ibis, until over time the rare animal re-emerges.

"It might seem like this is encouraging inbreeding, which in a normal population is a prob-

lem," Dr Holt said. "But when you're down to so few examples of a species, inbreeding is already happening."

He acknowledges that the weakness of this process is the same as with the cloning of sheep for pharmaceutical and farming purposes: because the cloned animals contain identical genes, they are less able to resist disease and environmental change which a more diverse gene pool could withstand. Clones from small populations would be especially prone to genetic disease.

Advances in reproductive technology are already helping

to preserve and enlarge threatened species. In general, they have been adapted from the methods first developed either for humans or farm animals, including frozen embryo storage and implantation, *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) and artificial insemination. Embryo transfer has been used in eland, baboon, deer and marmoset species, while IVF has been used to breed Indian desert cats and tigers. Artificial insemination has bred giant pandas, rare ferrets and antelopes.

Pregnancy testing for zoo animals is also proceeding rapidly, being applied both to captive elephants and to wild black rhinos in Zimbabwe.

Frogs are dying in their thousands in British ponds, apparently because of a mixture of previously unrecognised virus and an opportunistic parasite brought in from abroad with ornamental fish.

Andrew Cunningham, of London Zoo, said that in the past five years 100,000 frogs appear to have died from causes which left them bleeding from their mouths and internal organs. A study has identified three potential causes, including two viruses, known in Italy and Australia, and the pond parasite, known in South Africa.

A drop in temperature can change the sex of chickens

A brief, chilly spell can change the sex of chickens in the egg, the festival learnt yesterday.

The finding, which has been patented, could eventually lead to big changes in the poultry industry, writes Nicholas Schoon.

If the temperature is dropped by a few degrees for three days during the embryological development of a freshly laid egg, some chickens which should hatch out male instead become female.

They have the genes and chromosomes for maleness but they are fully functional females able to lay fertile eggs. If they are then crossed with normal males, the resulting chicks are all male, said Professor

Mark Ferguson of the University of Manchester.

This is what interests the poultry industry. All the female chicks which hatch from the breeding stock which provides the broiler chickens we eat are destroyed after hatching. Only the males put on enough meat, at sufficient speed, to make them economically viable. So there could be large savings if the breeding stock could be made to produce only males.

The chilling technique only changes the sex of 10 per cent of males into females, although if these birds are then crossed with normal males an all-male brood results.

Professor Ferguson believes

the cooling can only work its effect on a minority of chicks which are "near the border line" of the male-female spectrum.

The cooling is thought to work by slowing down the operation of enzymes involved in sex determination.

The cooling has to be done very precisely. Chickens try to keep their eggs at a steady 37.5C below their body. This is the temperature used in commercial incubators.

Professor Ferguson also believes it is possible, but rather more difficult, to change genetically female chicks into functional males by altering temperature during embryological development which

opens up the possibility of only female chicks being hatched out with no males.

That could boost the egg laying industry by ending the need to destroy all the male chicks hatched by the egg laying breeds which provide our egg laying hens. The poultry industry has shown interest in his work, but has yet to come forward with any funding.

Such changes are not unknown in the wild. Professor Ferguson pointed out. The sex ratio of baby crocodiles and alligators is known to be strongly influenced by temperature. If the eggs are kept at 30C the hatchlings are all female and at 33C they are all male.

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مكتبة الجليل

the devolution votes

Scots poised for Home Rule

Stephen Goodwin

Some 3.9 million people in Scotland are entitled to vote in today's referendum and so introduce a new era in their history.

If they heed the words of a petition presented in Edinburgh yesterday and cast their vote "without fail in favour of the restoration of our native parliament" laws on most of the country's domestic affairs will be made in Scotland for the first time in nearly 300 years.

On two separate ballot sheets voters will be asked if they want a Scottish Parliament and if they believe it should have

"tax varying" powers.

If, as opinion polls suggest, home rule is endorsed today a Scotland Bill will be introduced to the Westminster Parliament before Christmas.

The legislation is expected to receive royal assent by the summer or autumn of next year and elections would be held in the first half of 1999.

MSPs - Members of Scottish Parliament - would be elected under a form of proportional representation - 73 would be elected under the present first-past-the-post system and the re-

maining 56 selected from party lists. PR has been portrayed as a way of breaking the traditional Labour stranglehold on Scottish politics.

However, one opinion poll yesterday suggested that Labour could still win an outright majority in the 1999 election - precisely the outcome which Scots outside the Central Belt have always feared.

In 1979 when the last Labour government's devolution proposals narrowly failed it was partly because people in the Borders, north-east Scotland

and Orkney and Shetland feared domination by the municipal socialists of the Glasgow region.

Headed by a First Minister the new executive and Scottish Parliament will have responsibility for functions which are already administered by the 12,000 civil servants of the Scottish Office.

Democratic control is following earlier "bureaucratic devolution". Scots will have control over their own health service, education and training, local government, housing, eco-

nomic development, transport, law and order, the environment, farming and fishing, and sport and the arts. But not over monetary policy, employment legislation and social security.

It will be paid for, as now, by a Treasury block grant. This amounted to £14bn last year but will be cut to £12.8bn by the year 2000 when the Parliament comes into being.

The tax-varying power will enable the Parliament to vary the basic rate of income tax up or down by 3p. This would bring in about £450m. Chan-

cellor Gordon Brown has emphasised that the new Parliament must be prudent and is looking for any shortfall in funding to be made up by savings.

However, for most Scots and other residents north of the border going to the polls today it will be the emotion of home rule rather than the mechanics of government, and even taxation, that are uppermost.

It is an opportunity to take part in making history and one which as Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, said yesterday "will not come around again for a very long time".

By Europe's standards, a quiet affair

A big moment in history, but the Scots seem unexcited. Steve Crawshaw reports

In the centre of the Fair City of Perth, campaigners are preparing for today's crucial vote. Posters, megaphones, leaflets, flags. One of Scotland's best known politicians stands on the High Street, as part of a campaign to drum up support. Today's Scottish referendum could lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom itself. In short, a moment of history.

But Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, does not get an excited response, among the voters of Perth. He chats for a while to three schoolgirls, who listen with faintly bored expressions to what he has to say.

The lack of drama in Perth - a seat held by the pro-independence SNP - is reflected across Scotland, although one woman has done more this week than anybody else to boost the sluggish Yes campaign: Baroness Thatcher probably drove many Scots into the arms of the Yes-Yesses.

Her passionately anti-devolution words reminded Scots of the finger-wagging intolerance from which they were desperate to get away. Even today, the words "Thatcher" and "poll tax" serve as a reminder that a Westminster parliament can ride roughshod over the wishes of Scottish voters. In the words of the *Scotsman*, Lady Thatcher herself is "living proof of the need for home rule".

Until the intervention of the former prime minister, there had been little fire in the campaign. The apparent willingness of the new government to talk and to listen, and the respect for the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar means that few are as passionately anti-Westminster as they used to be.

One Glaswegian notes the obvious paradox: "If the Tories were still running things, it would be a stronger Yes. But if they were running things, there'd be no referendum." Scotland has sometimes seemed in the past few years to fall into a European pattern for the 1990s. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania broke away from Moscow; neat little Slovenia (which lacked the ethnic complexities of Croatia or Bosnia) broke away from Yugoslavia; Slovaks sliced themselves away from the Czechs. Independence for new countries - unthinkable, for four decades - was suddenly fashionable, in the new Europe. Meanwhile, Scottish anger at London's arrogance was great.

In Moscow and Belgrade, the parallels with Scotland seemed obvious. "What would you [English] do, if Scotland tried to destroy the United Kingdom?" Russians and Serbs repeatedly asked, when explaining why they had to use force, to prevent secession. I pleaded ignorance on the constitutional details.

But I assured my questioners that no government in London would send tanks up the M1, to bring the Scots under control. I was greeted with disbelief. "When push comes to shove..." they seemed to retort.

Violent suppression apart, Lady Thatcher still appears to subscribe to a "never-mind-the-people" philosophy. She declared in Glasgow this week: "A majority vote won't make something that is fundamentally wrong right." But resistance to change has usually been counter-productive.

The "you-must-not" philosophy, in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, was an important factor in creating a singleness of purpose among pro-independence campaigners there. When Slovenia held a referendum on independence in December 1990 (tanks were sent in a few months later), excited Slovenes wanted to talk of little else. The contrast with Scotland - where most people say that they have not even discussed the subject in recent days - could hardly be greater.

Even in democratic Czechoslovakia, the lack of give-and-take hastened the break-up of the federation. "All or nothing," said Prague's Thatcher-loving prime minister, Vaclav Klaus. So the Slovaks, resenting the ever-snoopy Czechs (echoes of the Scottish-English relationship, at its trickiest), took all. In 1992, they packed their bags and left. The velvet divorce was less than velvet; it left bitterness on both sides.

In Britain, such a not-quite-velvet divorce might still happen. But a closer comparison may be with western Europe, where movements for greater autonomy have been less about candlelit crowds and romantic singings, more about constitutional nit-picky - and tolerance. Germany prides itself on its stability, partly because

Only if Thatcher style ghosts return does separatist feeling look set to grow

power is so devolved. The Spanish region of Catalonia has been allowed a considerable degree of autonomy, and the pressure for full independence has fallen.

Tam Dalyell, Labour's leading dissident anti-devolution campaigner, insists that the proposed Scottish parliament is a "motorway without an exit". He fears full independence, just as SNP activists hope for it. But, if Scottish voters are wary about even taking the modest step of creating a Scottish parliament, then they are likely to be still warier of full independence.

Only if Thatcher-style ghosts return to haunt Scotland, imposing a twenty-first century equivalent of the loathed poll tax, does separatist feeling look set to grow.

The Labour government hopes that the proposed creation of a Scottish parliament means that we have now passed the high-water mark of secessionist feeling. Conversely, a bout of seriously bad English behaviour may be the only hope, for the pro-independence SNP.

Thanks on the motorway would be too much to hope for, even in the most extreme scenario. But a Portillo-type leader seeking to emulate Margaret Thatcher might just do the trick.

For the SNP, a new bout of Thatcherite intolerance - not quite as bad as the Kremlin or Slobodan Milosevic, but almost - could be the ultimate dream.



Free-thinker: Louis 'The Book' Livingstone outside the portable hut that has been home to the 'Vigil for Democracy' for five-and-a-half years

Photograph: Brian Harris

End of a long vigil, and a rare old chinwag

Douglas Fraser

The number 1979 is an inauspicious one for Scottish home rule, being the year that the last plans came badly unstuck. But on the front of a brightly painted portable hut outside Edinburgh's proposed parliament building today is day number 1979.

This is the Vigil for Democracy, a makeshift assembly of slogans, satire flags, ironic artefacts and eclectic people. They have kept the faith through five Scottish winters,

since the Conservative election victory on the morning of 10 April 1992 brought indignant home rulers from up to 200 miles away to protest outside the Royal High School building and the Scottish Office headquarters across the road.

Tonight the vigil is to be the focus of a BBC outside broadcast unit. And tomorrow, with a pavement party to celebrate the expected Yes-Yes vote, the vigil ends. "At long last, the people of Scotland will have had their chance to speak, so there's no reason for us to continue after that," says one of democracy's vigilantes, Gillian Grant.

The hut is to go to the allotment of a mental health charity, all the leaflets and the diaries kept through five-and-a-half years are to be archived at the National Library of Scotland, and several of the artefacts are to go to an Edinburgh museum.

By next week, the pavement, which has been a windswept focus of Scottish protest, will be cleared, and all that will be left will be a cairn memorial on Calton Hill above it.

"We could have sat here till

Hell froze over, and it wouldn't have changed a thing," concedes Ms Grant, an Edinburgh office worker, who has taken a week's holiday to help the Yes campaign. "But we've been part of a wider movement for change. When the books are written, the vigil will have its place."

The vigil has involved between 20 and 30 people through most of its life, most from Edinburgh, though few of them have stayed involved throughout. There is no party affiliation, no hierarchy, no spokesperson and no voting on policy - every-

thing at their Sunday afternoon meetings is done by consensus.

"This was just ordinary people who felt that they'd had enough," says Ms Grant. "It was just enthusiastic amateurs." That includes Louis "The Book", an eccentric homeless man who has entertained foreign tourists with his explanations of Scottish politics and slept in the hut at night when boy racers have gathered on Regent Road outside.

John Orr joined the vigil two years ago, after having been pa-

triotically fired-up by the film *Braveheart*. "It has been pretty grim through winter, but we believe in this, we have a passion and a vision," he says.

"The Scots' idea of talking politics is sitting at home or in the pub, moaning and groaning, whereas here you can have a good chinwag and get a few things off your chest."

"I'm proud of the vigil," adds Gillian Grant. "It's had a lot of media coverage and raised consciousness. But like everything else, it just comes to a natural end."

Yes vote boost to Welsh economy

Tony Heath

Wales stands to benefit economically from the establishment of an elected assembly, according to a new report.

The report by the Institute of Welsh Affairs, published eight days before Wales goes to the polls, seem set to widen a debate which so far has been marked by apathy and has shed little light on economic considerations.

The authors Ross MacKay, director of the Institute of Economic Research at the University of Wales, Bangor, and Rick Audeas, of Newcastle University, find that over the past two decades prosperity in Wales has declined relative to the rest of the United Kingdom.

Dissecting the formula under which resources are transferred from central government to the regions they conclude: "Regional transfers to Wales are not notably generous when compared with transfers made in other countries for regions at similar levels of relative prosperity."

The location of government influenced both economic and political decisions. The report maintains that it was difficult to reverse the centralising policies of countries like Britain, but

claim that devolution would provide a counterweight to the UK's well-entrenched tendency to accrete power in London.

The disparity between the regions was highlighted, the report points out, by the fact that the South-east of England has a Gross Domestic Product per head ranking of 16th out of 76 European regions, against Wales's 34th place.

In a commentary on the 52-page report Brian Morgan, of the Cardiff Business School and formerly chief economist with the Welsh Development Agency, says that the Welsh Office failed to defend Welsh interests in 1993 when the Government reviewed its development area policy which allocates help to less prosperous areas. Scotland succeeded in keeping its coverage at 46 per cent of the population but in Wales the figure fell from 35 to 15 per cent.

Writing the report's introduction Gerald Holtham, director of the Institute of Public Policy Research, said the document demolishes practically all the economic arguments put up against an assembly. "Given the chance of power to do good it seems extraordinarily pessimistic to reject it [an assembly]

on the grounds that it could also do harm."

Meanwhile, the founder of the "Just Say No" campaign launched a bitter attack on the Welsh Office ministerial team working for a "Yes" vote in the referendum. In an interview in the Welsh-Language magazine *Barn*, Caryl Pugh, a founder of the "No" campaign attacked Ron Davies the Secretary of State for Wales, and Peter Hain, a Welsh Office minister.

According to Mrs Pugh, a Labour Party activist from Rhondda, Mr Davies had instructed party members to shut up if they disagreed with the government's devolution plans. "Ron Davies is behaving like Hitler" she told the magazine. She predicted that if the vote was lost next week Mr Davies and "the grumpy Neath boy" will go. Mr Hain is MP for Neath. He is singled out for special treatment apparently because of his background. He was brought up in South Africa and played a leading role in the Anti-Apartheid Movement when he moved to Britain.

In a joint statement Mr Davies and Mr Hain said the personal attacks "are beneath contempt and we intend making no response".

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news

Bronze of Newton sets final seal on new British Library



Cherie Booth QC unveils a statue of Sir Isaac Newton, by Sir Edoardo Paolozzi (left), based on an illustration by William Blake, at the new British Library in St Pancras yesterday. The library opens on 24 November
Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Cook spells out reform of the Lords

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The Government is to press ahead with the early reform of the "medieval" House of Lords, the TUC congress heard yesterday.

In a pointedly "fraternal" address which contrasted with the Prime Minister's stern strictures of Tuesday, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook gave the clearest indication yet that the policy would be set out in the New Year's Queen's Speech.

Mr Cook compared the Upper House with the cast of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera and promised that hereditary peers would lose their vote.

To warm applause he said: "By the time we meet again next year, we will be on the verge of putting into practice our commitment to clear that medieval lumber of Parliament and to make it absolutely established in both Houses of Parliament that the people who take part in passing the laws of our country should earn their seat by the process of democracy, not by the right of birth."

While the pledge to reform the Lords appeared in Labour's election manifesto, there was no indication of how quickly the legislation would be introduced.

Mr Cook's well received address compared with the less rapturous reception afforded to Tony Blair's sermonising on Tuesday and lecture on industrial policy delivered by Adair Turner, director general of the Confederation of British Industry, earlier yesterday.

The Foreign Secretary told delegates at the conference in Brighton that the relationship between unions and the Labour Party was not a "tactical alliance", it was a "strategic bond" which would endure.

He sought to enlist the help of trade unionists to communicate Labour Party policies to working people, a plea unlikely to pass the lips of the Prime Minister.

Mr Turner, only the second director general to address the TUC, made it clear that the CBI was opposed to the government's plan to introduce laws on union recognition.

He argued that it could lead to disputes and might sour industrial relations.

However, he said the CBI would continue in talks with the TUC in an attempt to minimise the danger of conflict and create a "workable" set of rules.

In his speech the Foreign Secretary said he understood Mr Turner's assertion that legislation could lead to tensions.

But he called on the CBI director general to accept that conflict could arise where a workforce felt their legitimate aspirations were being ignored.

In an attempt to find common ground Mr Turner welcomed the TUC's "Partners for Progress" theme this year and believed that there was considerable common ground.

The CBI leader indicated his disagreement with both Thatcherism and old-fashioned trade unionism. There seemed to be a "welcome escape" from the ideological struggles which characterised British politics ten or 20 years ago he said.

Echoing a theme of the Prime Minister, Mr Turner emphasised the need for flexibility among employees although conceding, like Mr Blair, that there was an equal need to ensure the "employability" of workers who could no longer look forward to a job for life.

The assertions of the Prime Minister and the industry leader contrasted with the findings of a report by the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux which said that Labour flexibility was bringing "intolerable insecurity" to thousands.

Flexibility should give workers the opportunity to balance employment with other commitments as well as enabling businesses to adapt to change more easily.

The report "Flexibility Abused" found that workers were often presented with a one-sided bargain. They were expected to be at the beck and call of management, but employers made few attempts to accommodate the needs of their staff.

Increasing numbers of businesses wanted to minimise their legal obligations to their workforce. Some contracts gave employees no guarantee of any work or pay each week - the notorious "zero hours" contract.

You're not in the real world, Blair is told

Barrie Clement

A series of trade union leaders queued up yesterday to throw Tony Blair's appeal to the TUC to modernise and enter "the real world" back in his face.

In a reference to the Prime Minister's speech on Tuesday, Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of the public service union Unison, Britain's largest, urged the government to enter "the real world" over public expenditure.

The normally circumspect Mr Bickerstaffe urged ministers to abandon the dogma inherited from the Conservatives.

He accused the Treasury of espousing a "contorted and distorted" perspective that capital investment in the public infrastructure was not investment, but debt.

"It is not seen that way anywhere else and the government should try and come into line with the real world," he said.

The Public Finance Initiative (PFI), under review by the government, was also part of the dogma which argued that "if it's public it's always, always bad and if it's private it's always,

always good". Delegates argued that the PFI, where business funds projects and then runs them for up to 60 years was simply a back door to privatisation.

The Union leader called for the government to abandon the expenditure limits inherited from the Conservatives.

Referring to Tony Blair's plea for modernisation, Mr Bickerstaffe said it could not be the modern way to have patients on trolleys, children without nutritious school meals and the elderly worrying about the future of public services.

Mary Turner, president of the GMB general union and a dinner lady, said that while her members were flexible as the Prime Minister suggested, they were not keen on remaining so.

Bob Crow, assistant general secretary of the RMT rail union, said he and his members worked in the real world where there had been thousands of job losses and where fat cats were lining their back pockets.

Congress unanimously passed a resolution calling for greater public investment and the abandonment of the PFI.

DAILY POEM

Oriental Aubade

By Rainer Maria Rilke
(translated by Stephen Cohn)

*Within this bed, is this not like a coast?
a narrow slip of land on which we lie,
the only certainties your high, firm breasts
and all my senses dizzy with desire?*

*The night, its sounds, the voices of its creatures,
the cries of fiercely-ravaging animals -
how terrible and strange it seems to us:
when gradually what we call day appears
is it not (just as night) unknowable?*

*Better if we could always lie as close
as petals to the stamens in a flower,
hidden from the violent frenzy everywhere
increasing, battering, threatening us.*

*But even as we press together tightly
and keep the crowding menace from our eyes,
it maybe hides in you or hides in me
because our spirits live by treachery.*

This week's Daily Poems come from Stephen Cohn's new translation of Rainer Maria Rilke's *New Poems*, which first appeared in German in 1907-08. *Neue Gedichte/New Poems* is published by Carcanet (£9.95) in a bilingual edition, with an introduction by John Bayley.

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I didn't act to save Winnie, says Mandela

South Africa's president denies asking Kaunda to detain key witness in Stompie murder case

Mary Braid
Johannesburg

President Nelson Mandela has denied that he arranged the disappearance of a key witness in the 1991 trial of his former wife Winnie for the kidnap of murdered teenage activist Stompie Seipei Mooketsi.

As the African National Congress struggles to contain claims that Mrs Mandela murdered activists during her notorious bodyguards' reign of terror in Soweto in the late 1980s, President Mandela dismissed comments by former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda in a new book that the president asked him to detain the witness Katiza Cebekhulu in a Lusaka prison. Mr Cebekhulu disappeared on the eve of Mrs Mandela's trial.

In the book, *Kaiza's Journey: Beneath the Surface of South Africa's Shame*, by British journalist Fred Bridgland, Mr Cebekhulu - now in hiding in Britain - claims that Mrs Mandela, found guilty in 1992 of kidnapping Stompie, 14, actually killed the boy.

Mr Cebekhulu, a former member of Mrs Mandela's bodyguards - the Mandela United Football Club - claims he saw Mrs Mandela stab Stompie after accusing him of being a police informer. Stompie was found in a ditch in 1989 with his throat cut. Jerry Richardson, the "captain" of Mrs Mandela's club, was later jailed for the boy's murder.

In a BBC documentary, based on the book and screened in South Africa and Britain on Tuesday, two other Soweto families accused the "Mother of the Nation" of being involved in the

disappearance or deaths of children. She was also implicated in the death of a Soweto doctor, Abu Baker Asvat.

While many in the ANC leadership regard Mrs Mandela as an embarrassment, her huge grassroots popularity called for a public show of solidarity yesterday. Mrs Mandela has risen from the ashes of her divorce and kidnap conviction.

Currently president of the ANC Women's League, she is a frontrunner to become the party's new deputy president, when her former husband gives up leadership of



Winnie Mandela: 'I intend to bare my soul to my country'

the party in December. The ANC yesterday asked for a special meeting with Dumisa Nisebeza, chief investigator with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the independent body charged with exposing the truth about South Africa's apartheid past.

Mr Cebekhulu has applied to the TRC for amnesty. The commission can grant indemnity to those who committed politically motivated crimes in return for full confessions. The TRC has

also subpoenaed Mrs Mandela to appear at a private hearing later this month to answer questions about the old club.

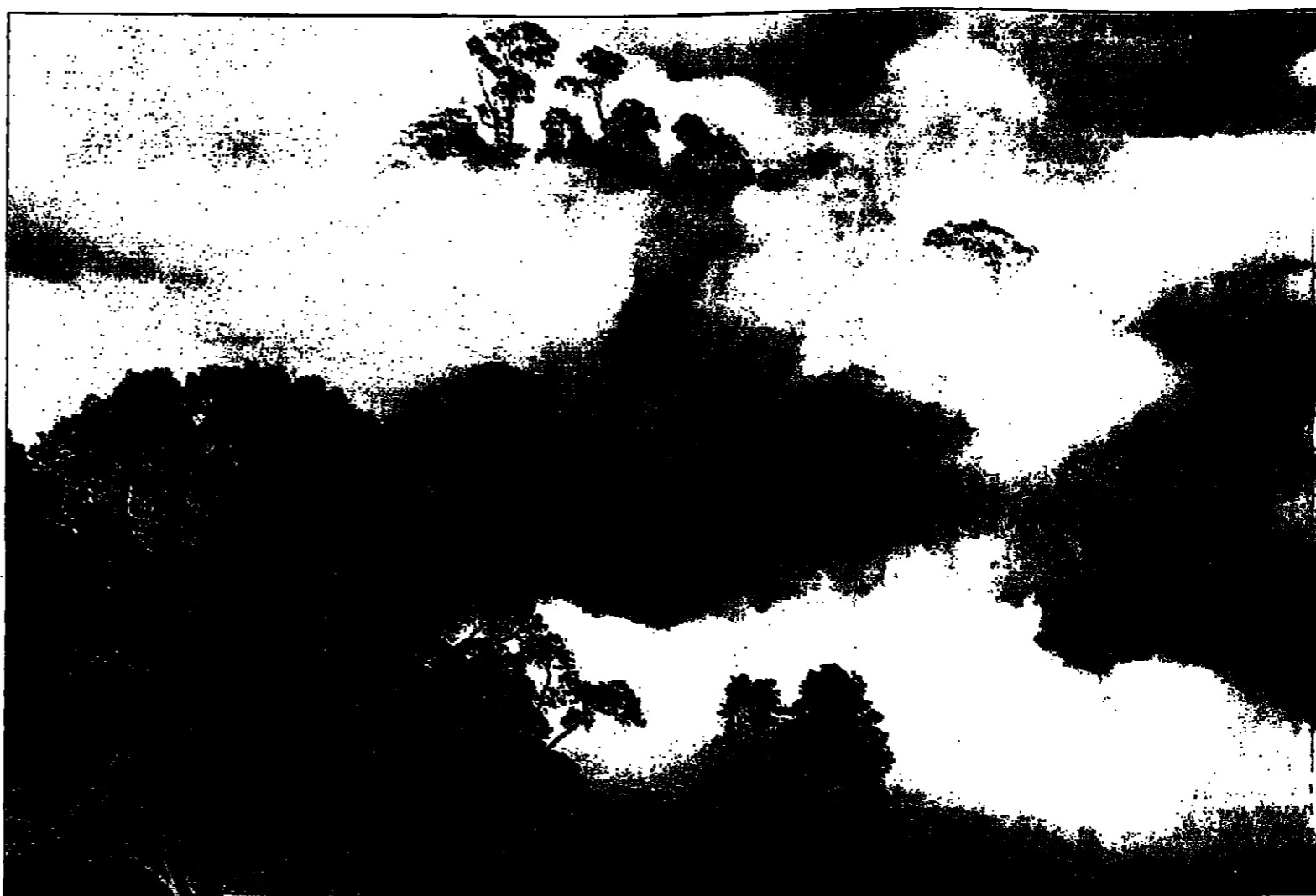
Yesterday Alex Boraine, TRC deputy chairman, said Mr Cebekhulu - who claims to fear for his life and is currently under the wing of the former MP Emma Nicholson - might be allowed to give his evidence at a special overseas hearing of the commission.

The pressure on Mrs Mandela has been mounting for months. Former associates have alleged from prison that they were contracted by Mrs Mandela to kill Dr Asvat.

On Tuesday, just hours before the documentary was screened, Mrs Mandela gave a rare press conference to deny the allegations. While the documentary painted a portrait of a cruel, violent and unstable woman, Mrs Mandela casts herself as victim. While Bridgland claims the ANC and National Party covered Winnie's murderous tracks to keep the fragile process of political transition on track, Mrs Mandela claims the police tortured prisoners to frame her.

On Tuesday she said she had watched in "painful silence" as her character and contribution to South Africa's democracy was butchered in the media. "I have seen confused panic in my grandchildren's tearful eyes, attempting to work out whether I am the demon I am portrayed."

Mrs Mandela has shunned the TRC's invitation to testify in private, and is insisting on a public hearing. "I intend to bare my soul to the scrutiny of my country," she said. "I beg that these issues be tested by the vigilance of the public."



Out of the woods: More than 69,000 hectares of rainforest in Sarawak has been reprieved by the freeze on development Photograph: Planet Earth

Malaysia's slump saves the forest

Matthew Chance
Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia has confirmed it is halting construction on its biggest infrastructure projects in a dramatic move to slash public spending. The cancelled projects include the building of a new capital city outside Kuala Lumpur at a cost of 20 billion ringgit (\$4.5bn).

Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's deputy prime minister and finance chief, said yesterday that several other "mega-projects" will also be frozen for an unspecified period. Among them are the controversial M\$15bn (£4bn) Bakun Dam in Sarawak, which environmentalists say would destroy more than 69,000

hectares of rainforest, displace thousands of people and produce little economic benefit.

The economically dubious Linear City Project, which aimed to construct the world's longest building at a cost of more than M\$10bn, is also to be placed on hold.

Only last month, Mahathir Mohamad, the prime minister, was urging Malaysian businessmen to "think big". The grandiose projects were all part of his "Vision 2020", an ambitious programme to lift Malaysia on to a new level of economic development by the year 2020.

The abandonment of these enormous schemes in the face of a major economic down-

turn, which has been caused in part by investors' fears that the country is overstretching itself, is likely to meet a favourable response on the financial markets.

Over recent weeks, billions of dollars have been wiped off Malaysia's stock markets and the value of the ringgit has plummeted. But the cutbacks constitute a personal humiliation for Dr Mahathir, whose vision of a 21st-century high-tech Malaysia is now receding.

Central to his plans for a competitive, post-industrial Malaysia is the M\$50bn "Multimedia Super Corridor", a 750sq km area of high-tech industries modelled on California's Silicon Valley.

At the heart of this scheme,

which was to incorporate an advanced interconnecting digital network to attract high-tech investors, was to be Putrajaya, a new Malaysian capital city of unprecedented technological development.

The decision to freeze construction on Putrajaya after completion of only the first phase of the city was the only surprise announcement in the package of austerity measures.

The development of a regional airport in the northern state of Kedah was also put on hold, while the armed forces were warned of stringent budget cuts over the coming months.

Several major infrastructure projects are still going ahead. A new M\$9bn international

airport in Kuala Lumpur is due to be completed next year. The capital's Light-Rail Transit system, a M\$3.5bn attempt to alleviate the city's traffic congestion, will also go ahead, according to government officials. So will a private sector-led project to span the Strait of Malacca with a bridge connecting the peninsula with the Indonesian island of Sumatra.

By cutting back on commitments costing as much as M\$100bn, the country will greatly reduce the cost of imports, and may even have a trade surplus. The economic turmoil in Southeast Asia means that Malaysia's future is far from assured, but an immediate crisis may have been averted.

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international

Keeper of the island fortress



Rauf Denktas (left), warns of his determination to counter Greek moves to integrate Cyprus into the EU, in an interview with Christopher de Bellaigue

Nicosia — Diplomats struggling to get Cyprus's Greeks and Turks to settle their differences all knock on the door of the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktas. But most come away with a flea in their ear. It was Mr Denktas who persuaded Turkey to invade Cyprus in 1974, when Greek nationalists threatened to unite the island to Greece. Since 1983, when he was first elected president of what Turkish Cypriots and mainland Turks call the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mr Denktas has embodied intransigence on the subject.

From his handsome house in a suburb built by Cyprus's former British rulers, Mr Denktas fulminates against foreign diplomats' ignorance: "I am spending my time explaining this problem to people who know nothing about it." The unenlightened rile him on two counts. They refuse to recognise the legitimacy of his statelet, and support Glafos Clerides — Mr Denktas's Greek Cypriot counterpart — in his drive to shoo him out of Cyprus, including the bit run by Mr Denktas, into the European Union. Once in the EU, he fears, Turkish Cypriots would be buried under the Greeks' numerical and economic superiority.

Supported by Turkey, Mr Denktas appears content to be president of his little territory. His pan-Turkic nationalism goes down well with the immigrant Turks who have settled on the island in large numbers since 1974.

He denies Turkish Cypriots are different from mainland Turks. "If that idea should spread," he warns, "we will become estranged from Turkey and become cattle feed for the Greeks." This distrust — prevalent on the Greek side of the island, too — is unwelcome to the mediators. "This guy doesn't want a settlement," one said.

Mr Denktas insists he does. "If the EU comes to its senses and does not bait us, we can go on talking," he says, referring to a tetchy encounter he had with Mr Clerides in Switzerland last month. He wants the EU to delay talks on Cyprus's accession until Turkey —

Turkish Cypriots' guarantor under the deal granting Cyprus independence in 1959 — joins the EU. The EU insists it will negotiate Cyprus's accession next year. "In that case, the talks will end and the island will remain two states," Mr Denktas says he is determined to meet every Greek move to integrate Cyprus with the EU with initiatives to bind his bit of the island with Turkey.

"If this was a question of resolving personal differences with Clerides, this would have been sorted out years ago."

He may be right. The two leaders have more in common than a roundish profile: both attended the British School in Nicosia. Those were the days when children from both communities played together and knew the other's language. But Mr Denktas remains dry-eyed. "I had Greek friends and we would go out drinking together. But these were not meaningful friendships; we never talked about politics."

Just as well, for Mr Denktas defends his corner stoutly, as Sir David Hannay, Britain's mediator on Cyprus, is aware. Mention Britain's former ambassador to the United Nations, and Mr Denktas wrinkles his nose. "I hope Hannay doesn't come back. If he does, I shan't talk to him."

A second British knight, Sir John Weston, would also not be welcomed with a signed compendium of photographs taken by Mr Denktas. Sir John, British president of the UN Security Council, forfeited this privilege after last month's talks, when he criticised "preconditions" Mr Denktas brought to the negotiating table.

Right now, the British whom Mr Denktas dislikes most are those manning the two sovereign bases retained after independence. Two days before our audience, British soldiers intercepted three Turkish Cypriot farmers smuggling 400 goats and sheep from the south into the north. On the recommendation of a Greek vet the animals were put down. "Greeks and British hand in hand," declared a local Turkish paper. Mr Denktas, his broody look suggests, agrees wholeheartedly.



Worlds apart: A Turkish watchtower with a metal silhouette looking out over the buffer zone on to an area near Ayia Napa, in the Greek section of Cyprus, which has been divided since 1974. Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

significant shorts

Clinton urges Congress to put him on fast-track

President Bill Clinton yesterday inaugurated the new political term by making a formal request to Congress to enhance his power to negotiate international trade agreements.

Mr Clinton wants Congress to restore what is called his "fast-track authority": the president's right to reach trade agreements with foreign states without having every dot and comma subject to Congressional amendment. This "fast-track authority" lapsed when the Republicans, fresh from their victory in the 1994 congressional elections, declined to renew it.

Mr Clinton says that he needs the power to conclude new free trade agreements with a number of Asian and South American countries — chief among them Chile, but also Brazil, Argentina, which he will visit next month. He says it would demonstrate US commitment to free trade.

Mary Dejevsky — Washington

Russians display royal archives

Archives documenting the murder of Russia's last tsar, including rare photographs of Tsar Nicholas II and his family and telegrams sent by the Bolsheviks recording their execution in 1918, went on display in Moscow. They were given back to Russia by Liechtenstein's ruler Prince Hans-Adam. He exchanged the documents for his own family's archive, which was seized by Red Army troops at the end of the Second World War.

Reuters — Moscow

Bosnians ordered to vote

Bosnia's parties came under heavy international pressure to go through with this weekend's municipal elections, jeopardised by the mounting tension between rival factions of Bosnian Serbs.

The International High Representative on civilian affairs, Carlos Westendorp, held crisis talks with the leader of one of the two Serb factions, Momcilo Krajisnik, in a meeting hosted in Belgrade by the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic. Mr Krajisnik was trapped in a hotel in Banja Luka for several hours on Tuesday after trying in vain to organise a demonstration against his rival, Biljana Plavsic.

Andrew Gumbel

Iran goes nuts over trade ban

The head of Iran's nut exporting body accused the European Union of banning imports of Iranian pistachios under pressure from the United States. "They want to replace us in the world pistachio market," said Mohammad Hassan Shams of the Dried Nuts Association in Tehran. The EU announced the ban on Iranian pistachios because of fears of contamination. Pistachios are Iran's largest non-oil export after carpets.

Reuters — Tehran

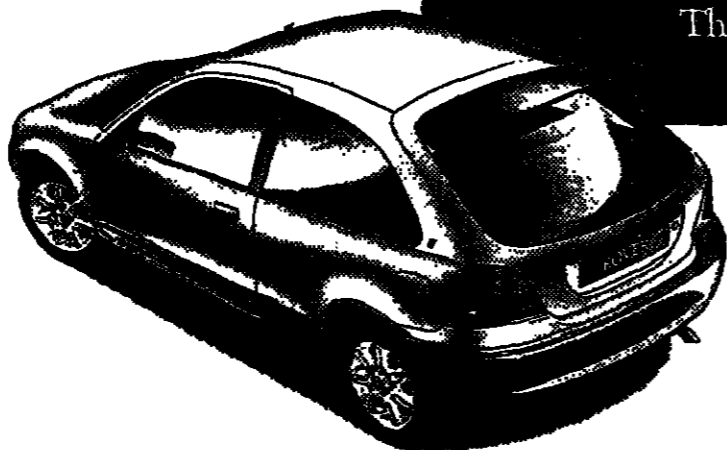
Flamingo's fatal leg-up

A four-year-old pink flamingo believed to be the first of its species to be fitted with an artificial leg had to be put down after he refused to eat, zoo officials said. The flamingo's condition deteriorated in the three weeks since he was fitted with a plastic prosthesis. The officials said that the artificial limb did not have a joint, making it impossible for the bird to lie down.

Reuters — Chicago

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Ambassador's new friend is an old foe



The US ambassador to Vietnam, Douglas Pete Peterson, greeted by Nguyen Vit Chop, 70, who captured him when his aircraft was shot down near Hanoi 31 years ago. The former POW returned to the village of An Doai, 40 miles east of Hanoi, yesterday for the first time since his capture. Photograph: AP

Albright backs Israelis to the hilt on 'terror'

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, gave full backing yesterday to Israel's demand that Palestinians make an assault on "terror", but made no public reference to Israeli settlement expansion and land confiscation.

From the moment Mrs Albright arrived, on her first visit to Israel as Secretary of State, her focus was unrelenting. She said President Bill Clinton's message to Israel was that "we are with you in your insistence that the Palestinian Authority fulfil the responsibilities and obligations it has undertaken".

At a joint press conference in front of his office Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, said that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, must decide whether he wanted "peace with Hamas [the Islamic militant organisation] or peace with Israel". Earlier, Mrs Albright visited a hospital to meet victims of last week's suicide bomb attack, which has set the tone for her visit.

Speaking of the injured, Mrs Albright said: "You can see in their eyes that they are ready for

a new life here." In the West Bank town of Nablus about 50 protesters handed out leaflets showing the Statue of Liberty with Mrs Albright's head and plunging a sword into the body of a bleeding man representing the Palestinian people.

In the days before Mrs Albright began her visit, Palestinian leaders tried to persuade the US that she should not concentrate solely on Israeli security, but also on Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, release of prisoners and safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank. Overall, the Palestinians are fearful that Mr Netanyahu is seeking to evade implementing the 1995 Interim Agreement under which Israel was to end its occupation of most of the West Bank.

Mrs Albright denied yesterday that she had used tougher words in private to Mr Netanyahu than she had in public. At a meeting earlier the Israeli President, Ezer Weizman, said to have told her, in words likely to cause controversy in Israel, that she should "knock heads together", the heads in question being those of Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat.

The Secretary of State will

see Mr Arafat today in Ramallah, the autonomous Palestinian enclave just to the north of Jerusalem, where she will presumably also repeat that he should destroy the "infrastructure" of Hamas.

Already one senior Palestinian official, Hanan Ashrawi, has criticised the way Mrs Albright began her one-week visit to the Middle East, saying she displayed "a wholeheartedly one-sided approach". At the same time the Palestinians are trying to draw the Americans into the negotiations, on both security and civilian issues, in order to dilute Israeli influence.

Mr Netanyahu is under limited pressure from the Israeli public to reach an agreement with Mr Arafat. The Palestinian leader may believe that the intervention of hundreds of Hamas members is his only real card, and is not to be played until he is promised a settlement freeze. While the diplomatic stalemate goes on, the balance on the ground in the West Bank between Israelis and Palestinians is changing. Sales of apartments in West Bank settlements rose by 50 per cent in the first seven months of the year, the Ministry of Construction and Housing said.

Leaderless Chinese battle openly for a place at the top

Teresa Poole
Peking

The Emperor is dead, and for the first time in years there is no one in China with sufficient political muscle to insist on who gets what top jobs. The 15th Communist Party Congress, the first full party congress since the death of Deng Xiaoping in February, starts tomorrow after unprecedented last-minute wrangling over personnel changes at the top of the Chinese power structure.

"The difference between this upcoming 15th party congress and all the party congresses held before is that this time we lack a god, we lack a great leader who can be widely recognised as the leader," said Wang Shan, a political author with links to senior party officials.

A Western diplomat agreed that "various solutions keep on going round and round" about personnel changes. "It is rather unusual in that normally party congresses are forums for announcing decision which are made beforehand. Things are not quite as smooth as they wish to have them portrayed for a unified, dignified leadership," he added.

In theory, all top job move-

ments should have been finalised last month when the leadership decamped to the Beidaihe seaside resort for its annual holiday. But this year a consensus proved elusive. A full party congress is held only once every five years in China and must put in place a new party Central Committee, Politburo, and all-powerful Standing Committee for the next five years, as well as agreeing next year's government changes, especially finding a job for the outgoing prime minister, Li Peng.

All this was supposed to give President Jiang Zemin an opportunity to impose his authority as the "core" of the post-Deng leadership. But Mr Jiang lacks the authoritarian power of Deng or Chairman Mao, and this leads to the sort of squabbling for jobs that one sees in more open systems.

The optimists say this is all part of China's evolution. "Personally I believe that today's situation, both for China and for the party itself, is a kind of progress," said Mr Wang. "It is not such a good thing if before the party congress opens, we already know who will occupy what positions." But the party would have preferred to sort all this out weeks ago.

The problem is that, under the constitution, Mr Li must step down as prime minister next March, after two terms in office. Zhu Rongji, currently a vice-prime minister in charge of the economy, is expected to replace him as the prime minister, but a new role is needed for Mr Li.

Mr Li is second only to Mr Jiang in the power hierarchy, and intends to remain so.

At first it was thought Mr Jiang might re-invent the position of party chairman with Mr Li as his deputy, but this irritated some party elders. Then it was proposed that Mr Li could take over the chairmanship of the National People's Congress from Qiao Shi - only Mr Qiao, who has less than close relations with Mr Jiang, did not want to budge.

Eleventh-hour negotiations have also continued on whether to expand the Standing Committee, and on new appointments to the Politburo. Mr Jiang is anxious to have as many allies as possible on these bodies, to secure his position into the next century. "I suppose it makes for a more democratic congress if some decisions are actually made at the congress," said the diplomat.

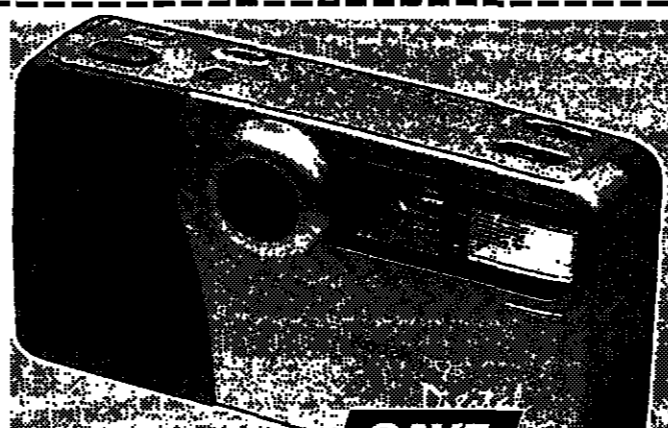
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obituaries / gazette

Professor Leon Edel

Leon Edel, biographer and editor of Henry James, was the foremost Jamesian scholar of his age and played an important part in rescuing the novelist from the indifference of British readers and the hostility of those American critics who believed that James had betrayed his birthright in turning his back on his native land and in taking British nationality.

Edel, like James, was a cosmopolitan. Born in Pittsburgh in 1907, he went to McGill University, Montreal, at the early age of 16 and there first became obsessed by Henry James. Having taken his degree, he won a scholarship to the Sorbonne, where he earned a doctorate for a dissertation on Henry James's theatrical years. While still a student he visited Edith Wharton at Saint-Basile in search of information about James's plays and about Walter Berry, a mutual friend of hers and James's.

She knew nothing about the plays and was defensive about Berry, suspecting Edel of being a "publishing scoundrel". But she soon warmed to him, and a few years later, when recommending him for a Guggenheim Fellowship, remarked with unusual prescience, for he had written little yet to warrant it, that he had "the sympathy and understanding which are necessary to lift a work of erudition to the level of literature".

During the Second World War he served as an intelligence officer in the United States forces, and afterwards as Chief of Information Control, News Agency, in the US Zone of Occupation from 1946 to 1947. At this time Rupert Hart-Davis was just setting up his own publishing firm. He was to open his account in February 1947 with *Fourteen Stories* by Henry James edited by his partner David Garnett, and was planning other reprints. He suggested to Theodoros Bosanquet, James's last secretary, that he should reprint his little book *Henry James at Work*. She demurred



Edel: magnificent obsession

but recommended "a brilliant young American" who had written a thesis on James in French, Lieutenant J.L. Edel.

Hart-Davis got in touch with him, and eventually they met in New York, where Edel was living in a flat that looked out onto the United Nations building, and earning a living by reporting its proceedings and writing reviews in an evening paper. Although he had briefly held an assistant professorship at Montreal before the war, he found that his French doctorate was of little help in persuading anyone to give him a new post. It was not until 1952 that he got back into teaching, first at Princeton and then with various professorships at New York University, where his career was crowned in 1966 with a Henry James Professorship created especially for him.

Meanwhile Hart-Davis had signed him up not only for an edition of James's plays, for which he already had an American contract, and which came out in 1949, but also for a new biography of the novelist. The first volume appeared in 1953, the second not until 1962. They earned him excellent reviews, and in the following year he was awarded both the \$1,000 National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize.

The biography had originally been envisaged as two volumes, but when the first one was finished Edel realised that he would need two more to complete the job, and so on with each succeeding volume, until there were five in all, the last and longest, not appearing until 1972. By this time the work was being hailed, in V.S. Pritchett's words, as "a masterpiece of the biographer's art". Edel had succeeded in making a life in which "nothing happened" as enthralling as anything in Dumas.

This was a remarkable achievement because James had gone out of his way to cover his tracks. In 1903 he made a great bonfire of his papers, and he revealed himself no more than he could help in his own letters, which he urged his recipients, without much success, to "burn, burn, burn". Edel's pertinacity, cunning and luck in uncovering these tracks, together with the sheer fun of the chase, provide an entertaining chapter in his *Literary Biography* (1957).

Edel was a stalwart defender of the biographical approach to literary criticism, which he rescued from banality by taking into account the writer's interior life, trying to disengage "the essence of a life... from the external clutter of days and years". His approach was always

psychological. He had been interested in psychology and psychoanalysis ever since he visited Alfred Adler in Vienna in 1930, and he himself had been successfully psychoanalysed to remove a serious writer's block when he came out of the army. His study *The Psychological Novel* was published in 1955 and *Staff of Sleep and Dreams*, what he called "Experiments in Literary Psychology", in 1982.

He was never tempted to imitate his Master's style but tackled complex subjects with exemplary clarity and wrote a limpid prose in which the anfractuosités of the quotations from James stand out like rocks in a mountain stream. A younger colleague once confessed sadly that he tried to write like Edel but "somehow it always turns out different".

He made many other contributions to Jamesian scholarship, edited collections of James's writings on the novel and on the theatre and his *Complete Tales* in 12 volumes in 1962-64. He brought out James's *Selected Letters* (1956) and a more comprehensive collection of *Letters* in four volumes in 1974-84. He also edited Henry's sister Alice's diaries (1965), and with the energetic help of Dan H. Laurence he compiled a *Bibliography of Henry James* (1957). He wrote prefaces to the Bodley Head Henry James in 11 volumes (1967-74) and to several reprints of James's novels.

He published books on other authors, including James Joyce in 1947 and Willa Cather, completing E.K. Brown's life of her, in 1953. He edited four volumes of Edmund Wilson's diaries (1976-86) and wrote *Bloom'sbury: a house of lions* (1979). This is a good general view of the group, but none of these books has quite the authority of his work on James. James was his fief and his preserve.

In 1976, 60 years after James's death, his great-nephew Alexander James unveiled a plaque to him in Westminster Abbey. Edel was called upon to give an address. It was the culmination of all that he had worked for.

Meanwhile in 1972 he had left New York to take up a professorship in Hawaii. There he spent the rest of his life, continuing to write and revise his work and indulging his fondness for swimming. During his academic career he served on many committees, held many visiting professorships and was rewarded with numerous honours; even his contributions to psychology were marked by honorary membership of a psychiatric institute and the American Institute for Psychoanalysis.

Edel was a genial companion and a welcome guest. He was an unfailingly entertaining talker, though one could not but notice how quickly the topic of conversation would shift to Henry James. But nobody minded, for he could talk for hours upon his magnificent obsession without ever becoming a bore.

Richard Garnett

I first met Leon Edel in the early 1950s with Rupert Hart-Davis, who had recently published his book on the friendship between Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, writes Janet Adam Smith. So I was accepted as an ally in their mission to bring James back to the centre of the literary scene with Rupert publishing, Leon editing, short stories, plays, letters, and finally producing the magnificent biography.

Our three-cornered friendship - later extended to include June Hart-Davis, Leon's third wife Marjorie and my husband John Carleton - flourished in Soho Square, the Garrick, my house and, after Rupert's retirement, at Marske in the Yorkshire dales. Wherever we were, whatever other topics came up - and Leon had a wide range of interests - the talk would come round at last to Henry James. I really believe that Leon - wearing a ring that had once belonged to the Master - felt that by immersing himself so deeply in James's life and thought something of their essence had been transmitted to him. "Even in death," he once wrote me, "the biographer makes demands on biography."

When I was teaching in New York in the 1950s, and Leon was a professor at New York University, we often met in the lively and hospitable home of John and Phyllis Gordon (John was curator of the Berg Collection of the New York Library and discoverer of the manuscript of *The Waste Land*). My sharpest memory though is of a dinner with Leon and his wife Roberta, a Freudian analyst, in their apartment on Central Park. There were three of us - but places set for four, the other diner being a huge black cat which perched gravely on a stool and ate off the table in a rather final way.

There was much talk of James and of Edel when I was visiting Anthony and Violet Powell in the summer of 1973 - they admired his biography, but had never met him. I said I'd love to arrange a meeting when Leon came over next - but I'd no idea when that might be. There had also been some grumbling from Tony about critics of his own novels who



Henry James in 1900: In a lifetime of James scholarship, Edel edited his letters and plays, collected his miscellaneous works and wrote a five-volume biography

said he overdid the coincidences. Back in London next day I found a message - Leon was shortly arriving! It wasn't possible to have a meeting that year, but when Leon came over for the James memorial in Westminster Abbey in 1976, he and the Powells did lunch with me, and he wrote afterwards of the delight and apparently inexhaustible substance of our talk. The ghost of Henry James had hovered over the table.

Next day we were all in the abbey for the unveiling, by Henry James's great-nephew, of the plaque in Poets' Corner, and the address by Leon. I had gone with Phyllis Gordon, who had asked Arthur Crook and me to lunch afterwards. Meeting Leon on our way out, he invited him to join us - and when he explained he was giving lunch to Alexander James, she invited him too. So there we were, enjoying an excellent lunch at the Ritz - four elders devoted to the Master and the young kinsman who clearly felt a bit out of his

depth and seemed more at ease talking about protest movements on the college campus. A *dominée* for a James short story? Announcing one of his rare later visits to London from Honolulu, "I hope you will dine with me," Leon wrote, "and we will tell our reunion and shrug our shoulders at Time."

Joseph Leon Edel, English scholar and writer: born Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 9 September 1907; Assistant Professor, Sir George Williams University, Montreal 1932-34; Adjunct Professor, New York University 1950-53, Associate Professor 1953-55, Professor of English 1955-66, Henry James Professor of English and American Letters 1966-73 (Emeritus); FRSL 1970; Citizens Professor of English, University of Hawaii 1972-78 (Emeritus); married 1935 Bertha Cohen (marriage dissolved 1950), 1950 Roberta Roberts (marriage dissolved 1979), 1980 Marjorie Sinclair; died Honolulu 6 September 1997.

Dr Patrick Fergusson

Patrick Fergusson was one of the last of the old-fashioned central London GPs. He had qualified as a doctor before the National Health Service Act of 1946, and delivered a particular, bespoke care that smacks now of another age; and, having established himself before the 1960s property boom drove so many London doctors to commute from the city's outer reaches, he lived, ever available, over his shop.

He dressed the part. With black coat, striped trousers, smart leather case and - years before antiquity demanded it - a handsome silver-topped cane (left him by a grateful patient), he was an unmistakable figure on the streets of Paddington or Marylebone. In his stately perambulations he resembled rather the local bobby, or a priest on his visits.

Medicine was for him a vocation rather than a profession. Modern London medical practices now operate in "teams", with bleeps and mobiles, working on rotas like normal people, enjoying days, even weekends off. Not for him: in the last 19 years of his practice he worked alone, without, until its last months, even an answering machine. After his loyal but rather fearsome secretary Mrs Cox (no one dared call her Cecily) died in 1980, in her mid-eighties, he never replaced her. If he left the house unattended, all telephone calls were, by an elaborate procedure, "transferred". Locums were only for his annual, three-week, holiday in Scotland.

He was born to doctoring. His grandfather James Fergusson, from Dumfriesshire, came south in the 1870s to practise in Richmond, Surrey. His father, Gordon, was a doctor in the Navy, retiring as Surgeon Rear-Admiral. His uncle and godfather, Drummond, was Virginia Woolf's doctor ("Fergie") in Richmond. His elder brother, Ian, is still a doctor in Richmond.

Patrick ("Pat") to his family was born in 1919 in Southsea, Portsmouth, where his father was then stationed. He was educated at Stubbington, a prep school outside Portsmouth popular with the Navy, and Epsom College, the doctor's public school, in Surrey. In common with many naval children, he had no single family home. His happiest school holidays were spent at his uncle's house in Peeblesshire, Hall-



Fergusson: doctor as friend

yards, once the home of another Fergusson, Professor Adam Fergusson, the philosopher father of Walter Scott's friend Adam, who introduced Scott to the local celebrity, the Black Dwarf.

After medical school at King's College London, Fergusson enrolled in the RNVR. His wartime career was spent largely on convoy duty in the North Atlantic, his duties as ship's doctor doubling with that of cellerman and, for the Normandy landings, photographer. Photography remained one of his preoccupations.

His medical career resumed after the Second World War at the Westminster Hospital, and it was at Westminster Children's Hospital that he met his future wife, Alison Miles, also a doctor and the child of a Rear-Admiral; they were married in 1951, shortly after which Fergusson went into partnership with Dr Fraser Carey, in a general practice based initially on Connaught Square, in an area much bombed which was to be reborn as the "Tyburn Estate", the Church Commissioners' contribution to post-war town planning north and

west of Marble Arch. "Connaught Village", as the estate agents now call it, was still an urban village then, with real shops, not shop-fronted offices, with cobblers, chocolate-makers, a gunsmith, a choice of fishmongers, a florist who sold Lucie Rie pots for a pittance, a dairy. It has changed slowly but utterly.

Fraser Carey, 14 years Fergusson's senior, was one of the distinguished sons of G.M. Carey, the England rugby player and Sherborne schoolmaster who was the original of Alec Waugh's "The Bull" in *Alec Waugh's Youth*; another son was Headmaster of Bromsgrove, another Bishop of Exeter, a third Legal Secretary to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Carey's Etonian urbanity and Fergusson's quiet courtliness made them fit partners in a practice which combined, as was then commonplace, private patients on the one hand and a full National Health "panel" on the other.

After Carey's death in 1972, Fergusson, reluctant to seek a new partner, sustained both private and National Health sides until pressure of work forced him to choose between them. When he elected to go private, many of his National Health patients followed him; some he deliberately undercharged (he charged anyway in guineas long after most patients had forgotten what a guinea was), and all he never charged a "going" rate.

Fergusson was a listener, whose tentative, even ponderous mode of conversation (the length of his telephonic pauses could be startling) inspired unusual trust. His inscrutable blue eyes could give way as easily to a boyish twinkle as to an expression of elaborate exasperation (what the writer Candia McWilliam, a friend but not a patient, called his "outraged ostrich stare"); he had a very dry humour and made an art-form of gentle teasing. In playing the part, he became the part.

His pastoral care, especially as he, and his patients, aged, often involved weekly visits, regardless of need, as friend as much as doctor. His practice extended, at various times, from royalty (Princess Arthur of Connaught) to the nuns of Tyburn; but his discretion was absolute. For a long time he had the care of the formidable Dame Rebecca West, but he refused to talk to her biographers. He was honorary physician to the Royal Society of Literature, through his patient and friend Molly Patterson, its doyenne Secretary, and would boast that he had known her successor Maggie Farham (by coincidence a Carey cousin) long before his son, who married her in 1996.

After the Second World War, Fergusson never went abroad again. He didn't acquire a television until he was nearly 50. When perforce he travelled in an aeroplane in 1992 it was the first time for more than half a century. He enjoyed home and Scotland. He read enormously, especially female novelists, with surnames beginning with B. He was interested in pictures, pots, watching sport and listening to *The Archers*. He was private, meticulous, painstaking; even his local pharmacist could read his tiny and immaculate writing, albeit his signature was prescriptively runic.

He would certainly have practised to the end, if a year after the cruel early death of his wife in 1990, rheumatoid arthritis had not immobilised him. During two months in hospital for a pair of new hips, he decided to retire.

Death, when it came, was quick. He had gone into hospital for nothing grave, it seemed, and died just five days after the death of his favourite artist, Carol Weight. He was reading the latest volume of diaries by his cousin James Lees-Milne.

James Fergusson

Patrick Drummond Fergusson, medical practitioner: born Portsmouth 22 June 1919; married 1951 Dr Alison Miles (died 1990; one son, two daughters); died London 18 August 1997.

Sabatino Moscati, archaeologist, died Rome 8 September, aged 74. Discovered the Punic city of Mount Sirai in Sardinia and Punic fortresses in Tunisia and Sicily.

Richie Ashburn, baseball player, died Philadelphia 9 Sep-

tember, aged 70. Batting champion for the Philadelphia Phillies 1948-59.

Abdullah Al-Turaiqi, politician, died Cairo, aged 80. A founder of Opec in 1960, when he became Saudi Arabia's first oil minister.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Prince Edward, President, Commonwealth Games Federation, attends the Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Princess Alexandra visits Aberdeen University's Department of Ophthalmology for "Seeing Research" fund-raising at the Medical School, Aberdeen.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

General Sir John Hackett

Under the extreme pressure of battle, John Hackett could bring both his powerful intellect and prodigious courage to the fore. In command of the 4th Parachute Brigade at Arnhem he fought alongside his men in hand-to-hand combat, knowing before the battle commenced that they were doomed by inept planning.

Severely injured by a shell splinter, he was taken to an enemy-held hospital where the German surgeon considered that it would be a waste of time to operate. His life was saved by a South African surgeon. Soon after the operation he was told that, unless he could walk out of the hospital, he would soon be taken prisoner. With his head in a blood-stained bandage, he escaped and was hidden by a Dutch family at considerable risk to themselves.

At the end of what he considered a full and exciting war, he was awarded the DSO and Bar as well as an MC.

"Shan" Hackett was born in Perth, Western Australia, in 1910. His father, also Sir John Winthrop Hackett, who was of Irish descent, owned two newspapers. He was educated at Geelong Grammar School, after which he studied painting at the Central School of Art in London before attending New College, Oxford, where he read both Greats and Modern History under Richard Crossman.

He had hoped to become a don, but his degree was not good enough, so he joined his great-grandfather's old regiment, the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars. However, he continued his academic studies as a subaltern and his thesis on Saladin and the Third Crusade earned him a BLitt. He also qualified as an interpreter in French and German and later, while serving with the Italian

cavalry, added Italian. In 1937, while serving with the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force (TIFF), he became fluent in Arabic.

At the start of the Second World War he was still serving with the TIFF and in 1941 took part in the Syrian campaign, where he was wounded and awarded the MC.

Recovering from his wounds, he met his wife-to-be, an Austrian living in Palestine, while walking by the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Although she was classed as an enemy, he was determined to marry her. Advised by many not to do so, he married her in 1942 in St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem. What followed was 55 years of happiness.

He rejoined his old regiment in the Western Desert where he was again wounded and awarded a DSO. While recovering from his wounds, he was on the staff of GHQ in Cairo, where T.E. Lawrence had spent a little time, in the First World War. Here Hackett was at his most creative, re-organising the raiding forces, such as the Long Range Desert Group and David Stirling's SAS as well as raising and naming "Popsa's Private Army". These small, highly mobile forces would engage the enemy behind their lines and then disappear back into the desert, only to reappear 500 miles further away, to strike again. Hackett knew from his desert experiences much about the war of the flea - how to sting in awkward places and make life uncomfortable for the enemy. He instinctively recognised the boldness and unorthodoxy of these units and was at one with their intellectual atmosphere. He had earned their respect.

Now at his peak, he was not a man to be behind a desk and, at the age of 33, he was selected to raise, train and command the 4th Parachute Brigade,



Hackett heads a student demo, 1974

Photograph: Hulton Getty

which he led with considerable success in Italy and North Africa. Although he came into the "airborne world" as a cavalryman, one of his officers recalled: "He had the right sort of flair. He was ahead of his time with his thinking and remained so."

Before Arnhem he briefed his officers about the overall plan, and spoke frankly of his mis-

givings. Later, seeing his men slaughtered alongside him remained indelibly etched in his memory. Apart from when he was with his family, he was never more at ease, after the war, than with the few survivors of his beloved Parachute Brigade. He recorded his experiences at Arnhem in the moving and revealing *I Was a Stranger* (1977).

Forthcoming marriages

Dr J.C.L. Booth and Dr L.A. Field

The engagement is announced between Jonathan, son of Sir Christopher Booth and of Dr Lavinia Loughridge, both of London, and Louise, daughter of Mr Michael

Fearfield, of Ripley, North Yorkshire, and of Mrs Angela Fearfield, of London, Cumbria.

Birthdays

Professor Norman Ashton, pathologist, 84; Mr Franz Beckenbauer, footballer, 52; Sir Austin Bide, honorary president, Glaxo, 82; Dame Margaret Booth, former High Court

judge, 64; Mr Paul Cole, racehorse trainer, 56; Mrs Mary Fagan, Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, 58; Sir Bernard Feilden, architect, 78; Mr Eddie George, Governor, Bank of England, 59; Lord Gibson-Watt, former government minister, 79; Mr Michael Lambert, racehorse trainer, 53; Mr Richard Linley, jockey, 43; Lord Mayhew of Twysden QC, former government minister, 68; Mr Andrew Rowe MP, 62; Mr Barry Sheene, racing motor cyclist, 47; The Right Rev John Taylor, former Bishop of Winchester, 83.

Anniversaries Births: Pierre de Ronsard, poet, 1524; David Herbert Lawrence, novelist, 1885. Deaths: David Ricardo,

economist, 1823; Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, Russian leader, 1971. On this day: the Duke of Marlborough defeated the French at the Battle of Malplaquet, 1709. Today is the Feast Day of St Denial, St Paphnutius, St Patiens of Lyons, St Peter of Chavonn, Saints Protus and Hyacinth and St Theodora of Alexandria.

DEATHS

JANSON-SMITH: On 6 September, in a tragic accident in Wales, Bryan, beloved son, brother and uncle, aged 64 years. Thanksgiving service on Saturday 1 October at St Peter's Church, Sharnbrook, Bedford, at 11.30am. Donations if wished to Northern Victim Support, c/o E. Hill and Son, Funeral Directors, Peshawer WR10 1HZ.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

For Gazette, please telephone 0171-293 2011, or fax to 0171-293 2018.

مكتبة من الأناضول

Yes, yes is the best and bravest answer

If *The Independent* had a Scottish electoral address, it would be voting yes today. Twice yes: yes to an elected assembly and yes to its having limited tax-raising powers. Devolution is a matter of principle. It is a way of protecting citizens against an over-centralised state. Relocating the power to decide is a way of bringing more people into the business of self-government, bolstering democracy and improving decision-making. Hard decisions, for example about taxing and spending, may not get easier the closer they are taken to people but they are more valid, since they get made in conditions of greater trust between government and governed.

There is also a particular British case for devolving power from Westminster. Britain is bottom-heavy: too much clout rests in the far south of its main island. The Palace of Westminster and its bureaucratic servants try to do too much about too many parts of the nation about which they know too little. Indeed, an Edinburgh parliament could improve governance in Penzance as well as Peterhead. It would reduce the load on the Commons and the Westminster executive; it would promote experiment and better recognise the truth that plural government is not only healthier but eventually likely to be more effective than monolithic administration.

Britain is pretty new. A version of Britain – especially a version of Anglo-Scottish relations – was made in the 18th century. In the 21st century it may come to take very different forms indeed. Britain was always a means to an end – the unified polity exists in order to improve the lives of citizens from Plymouth to Inverness, in part by assuring their identity and protecting them against conflict. All that will, we think, be helped by recognising that Scotland is a genuine British nation with a valid claim to self-government. This may or may not throw up questions about English nationality and self-government but there is no necessary reason why it need destroy a political entity called Britain, with its rich common heritage and mingled populations.

There is, to be sure, a "Scottish" case for devolution grounded in history, identity and a lingering belief that the Act of Union was not a final settlement of the Scots' relationship with the rest of Great Britain. The referendum is Scotland's rather belated rendezvous with modernity, the point at which its history flows into that of Europe and the wider world. A self-governing Scotland within a United Kingdom framework "fits" the modern frame. Federalism does not of course explain the success of the United States but its internal pluralism



ONE CANADA SQUARE CANARY WHARF LONDON E14 5DL
TELEPHONE 0171-293 2000 / 0171-345 2000 FAX 0171-293 3405 / 0171-345 2435

and readiness for experiment is a vital ingredient in that great nation's energy and innovativeness. Spain now flourishes so self-confidently partly because Galicians and Catalonians have a grip on their destiny. The political stability of modern Germany hinges on the fact that Munich is home to a prime minister, who is no less German than the chancellor in Bonn. Meanwhile small nations blossom from Estonia to Ireland, not pretending to autarky or financial independence but exulting in their capacity for autonomous politics and self-expression free of neighbouring

hegemony. The intellectual failure of all those 19th-century nationalists – including that spoken for by the Scottish National Party – is to see "independence" as the be-all and end-all of their political life. No nation, large or small, can escape the international division of labour or those processes of trade and capital investment conveniently labelled globalisation: now is the time, above all, for economic and financial alliances and unions.

What the referendum offers Scotland is self-government within those inescapable bounds. For too long Scotland has wallowed in a culture of

political dependency. Political attitudes north of the border have often been juvenile: blame somebody else, blame Westminster, blame the English. Nursery politics have prevailed, with the implicit threat that unless higher levels of spending are delivered, Scots would throw a tantrum and start breaking up the furniture. Psychologically, this has had a deleterious effect on the Scottish political temperament and manufactured an enervating culture of complaint. Has Scotland, through the latter half of this century, been the country of can-do and self-reliance it was once celebrated for? Hardly. Voting yes for a parliament but no to financial powers would perpetuate this.

Self-government is not an easy option. The polls have been indicating that many Scots do not wish to face up to it, some of them perhaps preferring the whingeing life. That is why today's vote is a critical test of a nation and the political maturity of its inhabitants. It is a test, too, of the party which has for so long been dominant in Scotland. Labour stumbled into the Constitutional Convention and ambled into the election commitment which, with admirable speed, it has now placed before the residents of Scotland.

That the party has pledged that the

assembly be returned on the basis of proportional representation is a tribute to the political pluralism of Scotland itself, and now of the Blair era. It is hard to see how the creation of an assembly could spell anything but trouble for the existing Labour set-up in Scotland; it could and should spell the end of Labour's stranglehold on west central Scotland, symbolised so handily by party politics in Paisley. It seems hard to believe, too, that the other parties, including the SNP and the Liberal Democrats, would not be drastically shaken up by the opportunities an assembly would give to reflect what is after all an internally diverse country with marked differences between its regions and its interest groups.

It is that fact that has led some commentators, not necessarily cynics, to wonder whether the people of Scotland do want more politics, even the opportunity for a new and different domestic politics. Won't they prefer the quieter life, the easier life of blaming and bemoaning? Our sense, and our wish, is that Scottish voters will take the adult part and seize, enthusiastically and realistically, the option offered them today for home rule. It could be a disaster. It could also be the beginning of the rebirth of a vibrant, energetic, happy land. But that will, or should, be up to the Scots.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Britain at its best and worst for Diana

Sir: On the streets of Britain for all of last week we were witnesses to a moral rebirth and a beautiful cleansing, where decency, patience, good humour and tolerance were reasserted.

Can this be the same Britain whose vicious spivs kick a schoolboy to death on a London street just because he is black, and whose soccer followers frequently disgrace a great nation?

The classless Britain that was so evident on the streets last week was so different: we saw a nation happy to be decent and unashamed of its grief – a nation of which Diana would have been proud.

Britain, take a bow.
PADDY FARREN
Barnstaple, Co Devon

Sir: For all my adult life I have been in favour of this country becoming a republic. This has not stopped me also being in favour of fairness, and I have been appalled by the injustice of the public attitude to the Royal Family, particularly the Queen, during the last week.

Whatever the grief felt by the public, it can only have been a fraction of that felt by two young boys losing their mother in such traumatic circumstances. Of course the Queen's first priority was to join in a family effort to help them cope. Expecting her to abandon this task in order to symbolically hold the public's hand was selfish, childish and insensitive. Did those who professed such devotion to the Princess of Wales really consider that it would help her sons to hear their father and grandmother criticised so savagely?

If the public truly wants the monarchy to continue it had better pull its collective socks up. Otherwise it may be that nobody will want to take on the job of being the monarch, and who could blame them?
JANET TIBBERGEN
Oxford

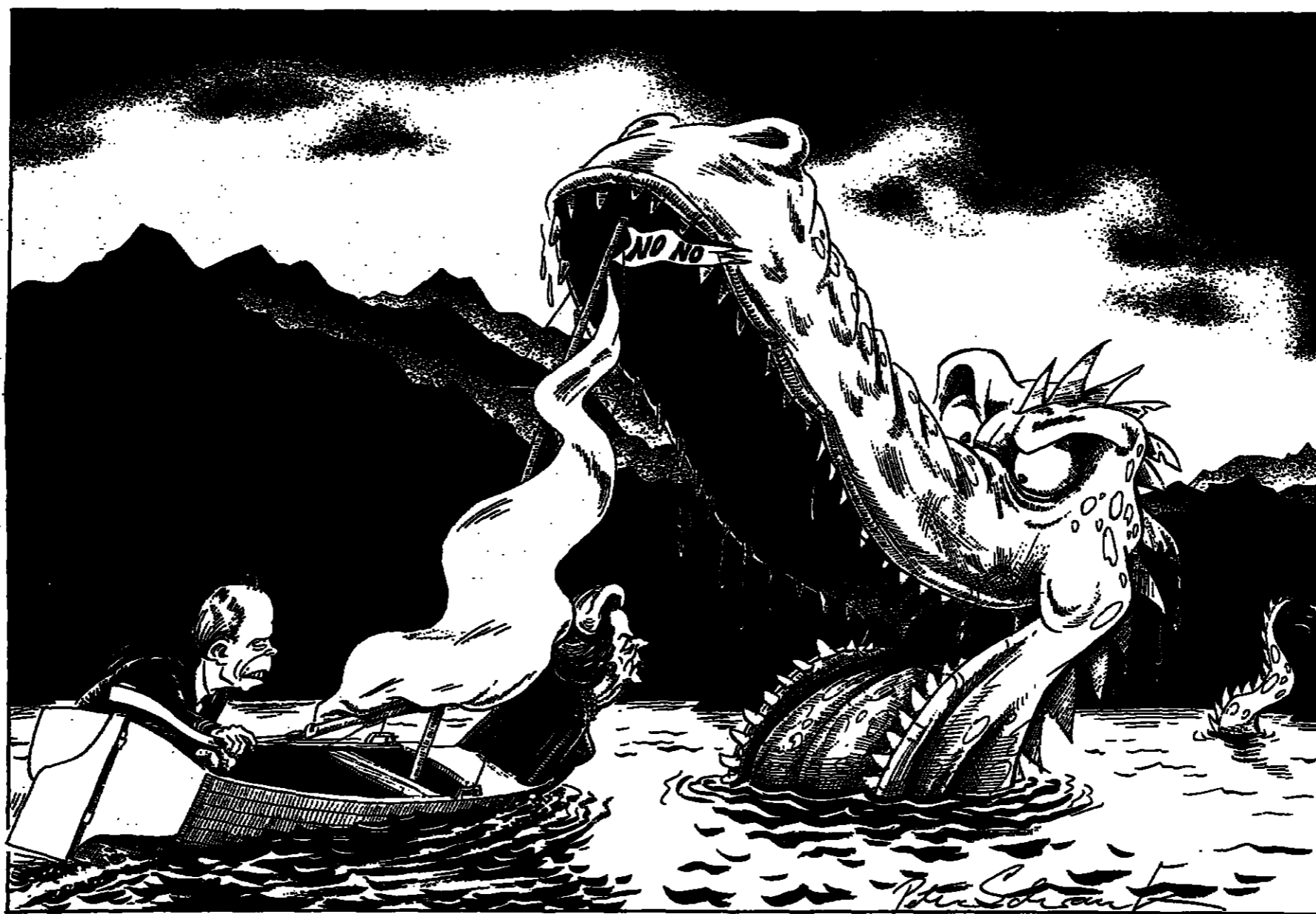
Sir: I agree with Jack O'Sullivan ("Diana's devotees join the new religion", 8 September) when he notes a new spirit about in the wake of Diana's life and death.

However, it is not new and it is not a religion. In the perceived absence of any supernatural being "up there" watching over us, many more people now believe that we must get to know and love ourselves and be in touch with our feelings, in order to watch over each other. Incidentally, this search is almost a compulsive one for anyone, like Diana, who has lacked love or been otherwise damaged in childhood.

I don't know why Jack O'Sullivan wants to give the name New Protestantism to this secular set of values. It already has a name – humanism.
ANGELA WILLIAMS
Newbury, Berkshire

Sir: The often-heard argument that the monarchy is preferable to having some superannuated politician (why so?) as president (Letters, 9, 10 September) misses an important point.

A presidency changes on a regular basis, and with it the surrounding hierarchy of dependent supporters. Over time different groups of people have access to the seats of power. Some would be more successful than others, but none could last for ever. In contrast, the monarchy has long formed the pinnacle of an ever-present, self-serving Establishment; a dead weight.



inhibiting the modernisation and liberalisation of British society.
PATRICIA GRAHAM
Tonbridge, Kent

Sir: Marjorie Hembury (Letters, 9 September) cites the Royal Family's descent from William the Conqueror as grounds for supporting the monarchy. Surely that is the precise reason for all self-respecting Scots, Picts, Britons and Anglo-Saxons to exile them.
TOM BERNICK
Dover, Kent

Sir: Since the funeral much has been said about the motives underlying Earl Spencer's tribute to the Princess of Wales. Of course it was both calculated and charged with personal bitterness and anger; those are the very reasons why it was so powerful. Beside it, all the platitudes about the life and death of Diana pale into insignificance.
ALISON EVANS
London SW13

Return of the border raiders

Sir: As a North-easterner (though living, like many a Scot, in London), I fear the potential effects of Scottish devolution in the border region.

English complacency about devolution is to be found mainly in the South-east. In Northumberland, still peppered with fortified buildings from the era of border raiding, we can see the difficulties ahead – although they will surely be dealt with peacefully. If there is a differential tax rate, with Scots paying more, who pays for the extra services needed by those

who will leave Coldstream and move the quarter mile to Cornhill on Tweed across the border? Other contingencies may suck people across the border to Scotland.

The Scots look likely to get their parliament and that is right, but the Government must accelerate proposals for a regional assembly in the North-east. Such an assembly would be best placed to deal with a Scottish parliament and sort out the new relationship.
ION SUTCLIFFE
London SW16

Sir: As a British Scot, I would like to suggest a campaign for an English Parliament. Westminster is Britain's parliament. Now there is talk of parliaments or national assemblies for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. What of England? There is only mention of possible regional English assemblies rather than a focus of English nationhood.

Does this reflect a lack of national identity and self-esteem among the English? Or could this be saying that there is an unspoken understanding that Westminster is the English parliament? If that is the case surely the English deserve their own question times and committees to serve their national needs. Let us either dedicate time for the four countries of the Union including England within the British parliament, or have national parliaments for each of these countries and a new fifth all-British assembly.

I believe a confident sense of Englishness would be good for the people of that nation. They feel, I

believe, albeit subconsciously, the suppression which comes from the confusion here and abroad between what is English and what is British. Perhaps this contributes to a lack of understanding of the feelings of national identity in the other countries of the Union. It does not help Britain. A United Kingdom of integrated partners is possible, but we will need courage to go further than the current plans.
DR DAVID REILLY
Kirkcubright, Strathclyde

Sir: As an Englishman I leave the question of devolution to the Scots, but those Scottish politicians who seem themselves leading a Scottish parliament might do well to consider the words of Sir Walter Scott in *The Heart of Midlothian*, when a character reflects on the disappearance of a Scottish parliament with the Act of Union: "I ken, when we had... parliament-men o' our ain, we could see pebble them w' stanes when they were in gude bairns."

But nobody's nails can reach the length of Lunnun.
DAVID BROOMFIELD
West Malling, Kent

Sir: The reason that Scots are likely to vote "yes" for devolution can be explained by the attitude of the English as exemplified in your cartoon (9 September) showing Balmoral situated in the realms of outer space.

As a Scot who now lives in England I have found that many southern English people are amazingly insular and ignorant of anywhere outside London and the

South-east. Most Scots have a broader outlook and many are probably hurt by the inference that the Queen is only truly in touch with the people when in London.
IAN M ARNOTT
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

Sir: We find ourselves both surprised and disappointed that the McMonster Raving Loony Party has put so little effort into campaigning for the "No, Yes" vote in Thursday's referendum on Scottish devolution.
JOHN SUMMERS
Cambridge

Challenges to celibacy rule

Sir: Bishop Lindsey's criticism (8 September) of Lynne Edwards' letter on the law of the clerical celibacy (3 September) is mostly incorrect. The law is in no way founded on scripture. The two New Testament verses he quotes refer neither to the priesthood nor to a law. They suggest that celibacy is a gift to be valued when given. There is no reason to connect that gift with the priesthood and many of the greatest celibates in church history – Benedict, Francis of Assisi and, one may add, Mother Teresa – were not priests.

Secondly, it is quite untrue that the bishops at the Second Vatican Council "discussed the Church's present law" before reaffirming it. They were, on the contrary, explicitly forbidden by Pope Paul to do so (11

October 1965). This was because so many had written in to challenge it. What the council said on the subject in no way reflects a mature debate. Nevertheless it remains striking that, for the first time in a Roman document, the council favourably commented on the married clergy of the Eastern Church. "There are many excellent married priests." Why what can be commended east of the Mediterranean is to be prohibited west of it, no one has tried to explain.

However, in the Episcopal Synod of 1971, Pope Paul did allow the subject to be discussed owing to great pressure from bishops in many countries. A majority of the diocesan representatives at the Synod actually voted in favour of a change in the law. It was only the votes of the Pope's appointed representatives which prevented this from being approved.

The theological, pastoral and missionary reasons for a change are even more evident in 1997 than they were in 1971. It is more than time that this be recognised.
PROFESSOR ADRIAN HASTINGS
Department of Theology and Religious Studies
University of Leeds

Just flowers

Sir: A plea to anyone leaving a floral tribute anywhere: please, please remove the wrapping. Apart from the fact that half-dead flowers in torn, soggy cellophane or paper look depressing, the tributes heaped outside the various palaces this past week would look really colourful, instead of a pile of grey/white, as seen on TV.
KARI OLAFSON
Casson, Surrey

Our landscape as a work of art

Sir: The director of the National Art Collections Fund is rightly anxious that Lottery money should continue to be available to buy works of art ("Lottery cash for parks", 4 September).

However, he shows a disappointingly narrow view by suggesting that our parks, countryside and areas of finest landscape are not part of the heritage. The English landscape was largely created by the daily work of the common people who toiled in the woods and fields. It is enshrined in our culture through poetry, music and painting but is experienced most widely by those who live in it and visit it now.

Because it is a living entity, not a museum piece, it cannot be bought for the nation with a large capital sum of the kind which the Lottery distributes. The countryside needs constant care by people performing tasks such as hedgerow maintenance, ditch clearing and coppicing. Urban spaces and village greens alike need reliable revenue funding if they are to continue to give refreshment and delight to the people. The Lottery rules should be changed so that it can finance the upkeep of our living inheritance.

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy may change the emphasis of farming subsidies from production to "agri-environmental" schemes, but the money allocated to such schemes is peanuts compared with overall CAP spending, and we can no longer rely on the landscape to be an automatic by-product of food production as farms shed labour still further to cut costs in order to compete with world prices.
SARAH WARD
Horton Kirby, Kent

More trains in the South

Sir: This winter, Connex South Central will be running more train services than we did last winter – 1633 compared with 1582, which is significantly more services than the 1450 we inherited from British Rail. It also considerably exceeds our contractual commitments.

These facts – ignored in your business comment of 9 September – mean we will continue to operate a turn-up-and-go service on the South London Metro, with many of its stations still receiving at least six trains an hour.

Since we launched the South London Metro in June last year, we have seen consistent month-on-month growth, with increased sales of cheap day return tickets, one-day travelcards and season tickets. I am puzzled by your statement, "If Connex South Central could not make a go of its new Metro service..."
PARESH PATEL
Service Group Manager, South London
Connex South Central
Croydon, Surrey

Privacy promise

Sir: Congratulations on your commitment never to publish pictures of Princes William and Harry in private situations again. Why not extend this commitment to include all individuals who have not chosen to put themselves in public life?
RICHARD SIMMONS
Bramley, Kent

interview

Environment minister Angela Eagle talks to Suzanne Moore about her decision to come out as a lesbian, about changing attitudes, and the battle to do her job and still have a personal life

'I need to get things sorted'

When Angela Eagle, the MP for Wallasey and junior environment minister, shows me into her office, I cannot get over how tiny it is. "I know," she laughs. "When they told me that this was a ministerial office, I couldn't believe it. Apparently when they sack you, you get the good office. I hope I won't have that experience too soon." This seems highly unlikely as everyone you talk to says Angela Eagle will go far. She is seen as highly talented and exceptionally hard-working by all her colleagues. She is also spoken of as a somewhat serious and private person. Few know that she is a passionate music and sports fan, happier in jeans backstage at an Elvis Costello concert rather than in the suits she first started wearing to make herself "look older". We begin, inevitably, talking about the extraordinary events of the past week.

Angela is the same age as Princess Diana was - 36 - and talks of how she cried her eyes out watching the funeral. "I thought of my own mother who died at 51 which is still young. I think a lot of people thought of their own losses and it was as if Diana's death had given us permission to cry. It is as if some big well of emotion got dammed somewhere and when it broke through the stiff upper-lip just crumbled." She claims she has never been

very good at hiding her emotions even though she has a serious side. "Yes, I am serious and that's not expected in a woman," but then she reveals, "I cried so much during Margaret Beckett's speech when John Smith died, Tory MPs came over to see if I was OK. I do get terribly sentimental. Mind you, I was in floods of tears over *ET* and when *Boyz* was on I just had to flee the room."

She sees the grief over Diana as "the emotional equivalent of the political landslide" and she thinks that the political landslide began with John Smith's death and the way that the values of the Labour Party struck a chord. "Tony caught that mood in his subsequent changes to the party." When I ask her whether it is right to look for political dimensions in predominantly cultural events she answers, "Well, the cultural is political. I think in the past too many people have looked down their noses at it. There is something very important about what Diana has come to represent. The female side of things has come to the fore." Angela is well placed to see how the culture of Westminster reflects this and how it has changed with the intake of new women MPs as she has been there since 1992. "When I first came here it was like walking into one of those clubs in Pall Mall. I was forever going into rooms marked Members Only

and finding that they were urinals. I was always being mistaken for a secretary. But a lot of these assumptions had already started to change. Having a female Speaker has made a huge difference. The changes have been gradual but now it feels like we are in a period where there is a rush on. Having a female Leader of the House is tremendously important and Ann Taylor is well keyed into how Parliament as an institution needs to change its workings. That means everything from the hours to how the day is organised. Like all the royal protocol that has caused so much trouble this week we have our own ridiculous protocol. For instance there is a rule that you have to wear a top hat to make a point of order during a vote. Traditionalists love it but it's stupid, it makes us look stupid and nobody understands it."

She describes the moment when Tony Blair first came into the house as Prime Minister. "Everyone clapped and you are not allowed to clap. The new MPs didn't know that and they just did it. So there was that one out of the way. At Question Time now I can see the women looking slightly embarrassed. That's a huge change from the shouting and leering that there used to be." Interestingly Angela doesn't go along with the view that Parliament needs to be more women-friendly, rather she

uses the expression "people-friendly". "I care about politics deeply. To change the world or at least a little part of it you have to come in here to do your job. It's not that I'm whingeing - I love this job - but you have to give up so much of your life to even get into that position. Even as a backbencher you can easily work 24 hours a day. Yet everybody needs to have another life so that they can be more balanced and have some insight into the people they are representing." She is very wary of becoming "institutionalised". "With your life as an MP it is very difficult to maintain relationships. Look at the high divorce rates here. There is a lot of pressure on your family. Just because you have signed up for this job

there is an assumption that your whole family has as well. When I was first elected I got some very moving letters from the children of former MPs saying that 'if you have a family, please do not do to them what mine did to me'. We need to be much more tolerant of MPs trying to maintain their family and personal lives."

So how does she manage hers? "I have a long-term and very happy relationship but sometimes I don't know how we find the time to see each other. You have to think not only about your partner but their family and your own. In my case I happen to be with a woman and I think I've only been able to cope with that because I have a very under-

standing family. My sister [Maria Eagle is Angela's twin and also an MP], my brother and my father, all of whom are heterosexual, have always supported me. And that definitely has made that aspect of my life much easier to cope with."

Up until now Angela has not ventured this information about her sexuality to her constituents but says she would have told anyone who asked. "I think people should look at you for the values you represent and the way you do your job locally. I don't think my sexuality has a direct relevance to those things." Several members of the party know that she is gay and have also been very supportive. "To be honest I didn't expect anything different. Attitudes have changed. The funny

thing is that all the straight men I've told haven't been in the least bit surprised. Most of the gay men were gobsmacked. I suspect that the straight men realise that you are not flirting with them; gay men, bless them, don't notice."

Her decision to come out now she says depended on two things, first, dealing with it herself and then, second, feeling the need "to get a handle on this job and make sure that I can do it properly. Now I am at the stage where I need to get things sorted so I can just concentrate on my work."

As the only openly lesbian woman in the House and a minister to boot, she certainly doesn't want to be seen as simply a spokesperson for gay rights. "That's just one aspect

The question is: should politicians be human beings? And I say yes we should be. I'd rather be governed by human beings than cardboard cut-outs

Photograph: Andrew Burman

of what I'm about. I've always supported gay rights to the extent that I believe gay people should have the same civil rights, equal rights, partnership rights and the right to be free from irrational discrimination as everyone else. I've always voted that way whenever such issues arose. Then again, my sister feels the same way and she isn't gay."

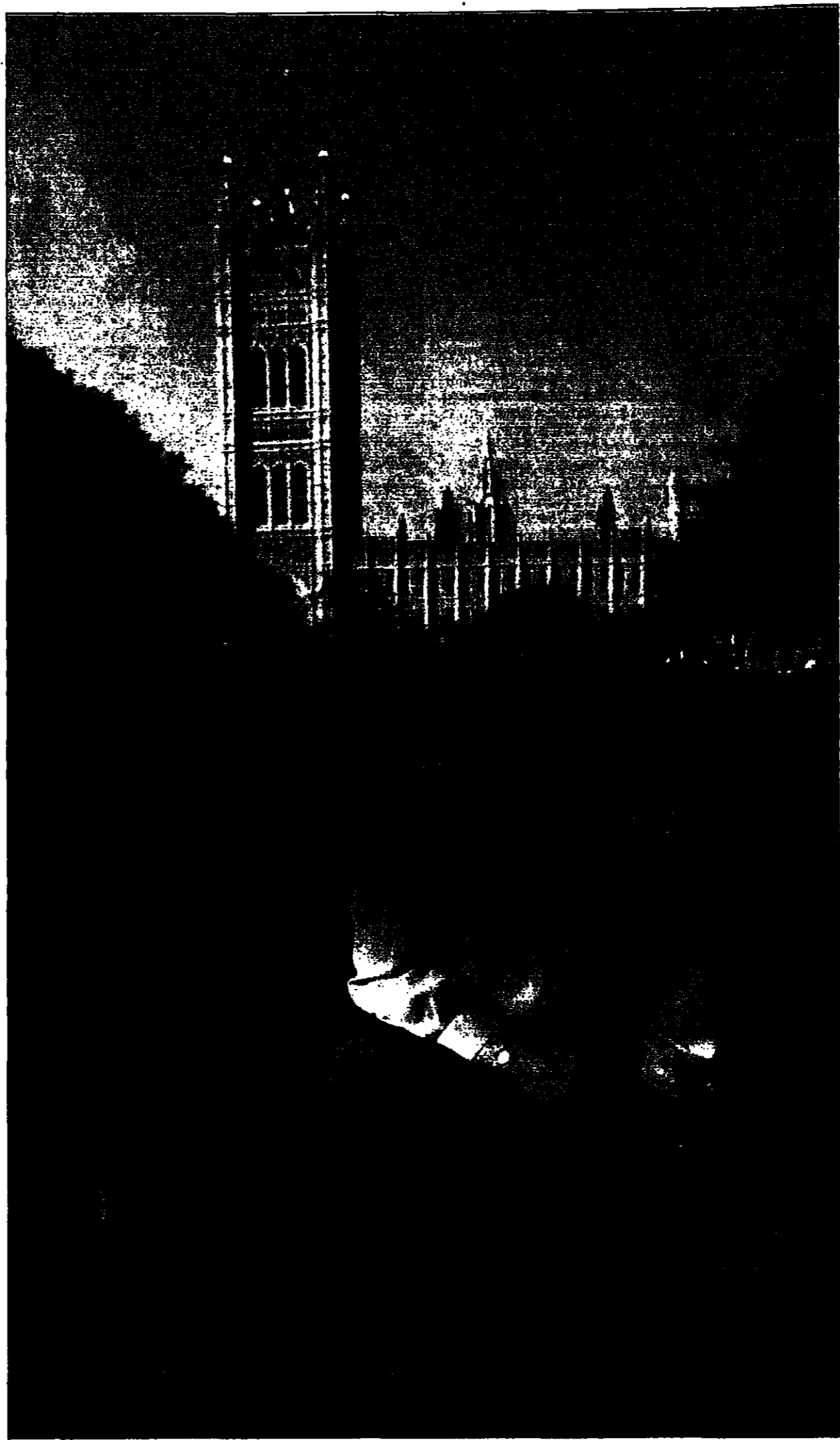
She is more than aware that many gay people have not received the kind of personal or political support she has. "It's obviously harder for gay people to be open. Some gay people cannot be out at work - it's not illegal to sack people for being gay. And it must be really hard to cope when your parents, the people who are meant to help you through life, have a major problem with you. I realise how lucky I have been."

So will we be seeing Angela and her partner at official occasions the way we see Chris Smith and his? She smiles. "My partner has never expressed any interest, any wish to come. She is actually very busy with her own life and I've always done pretty well without her there." I wonder how much of a strain this has been on her. "Obviously at the beginning when I was elected it was personally quite difficult. I mean, we know people, long-standing Members of Parliament, who have never been truthful, but I think times have changed and the best option now is to just be open about it."

Has she been at all concerned that her sexuality would be in any way a bar to promotion within the party. "I get no sense of that at all. I think people are more sensible than we sometimes give them credit for." Let's hope that she is right because other MPs I'm sure will be watching the public reaction to this before they make their own decisions to be as honest as she is being.

"I think the most significant thing is for an MP to operate as a well-rounded person. Relationships are the most important things in our lives. So is doing a good job and so is our happiness. There has been this puritan, almost puritanical attitude to politicians in the past. But the question now is: should politicians be human beings? And I say yes we should be. I'd rather be governed by human beings than perfect cardboard cut-outs."

Who in their right minds could disagree with that or let outdated prejudice stand in the way of this extremely young, gifted and female politician.



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Afore ye vote ... a wee Sassenach quiz

Good morning, Scotland! This morning or afternoon, unless you have something better to do, you will be going along to a polling centre where you will be asked to answer the following two questions:

1. "The English don't like their inefficient and corrupt parliament very much, so they want you to suffer one as well. Are you going to stand for it?"

And, 2. "Would you like to pay some extra Scottish taxes as well as all the normal English ones?"

Well, I think that sums up the great debate pretty well, but it seems a bit of fuss and bother for the sake of just two wee questions, so to give you value for money we have devised another set of questions for you to answer, maybe as you queue to vote, in our grand National Identity questionnaire entitled:

JUST HOW SCOTTISH ARE YOU, REALLY?

To find out, just answer these questions:

someone say, "I blame the English," do you say, "For what?" or do you say, "Right enough - so do I!"

2. Do you genuinely fear and mistrust the English?

3. Did you know that you, in turn, are feared and mistrusted by the Orcadians?

4. Do you feel insulted when you are abroad and people think you are English?

5. Do you feel insulted when you are abroad and people think you are Finnish?

6. Do you feel more insulted to be thought English or Finnish?

7. Do you have a funny Scottish accent?

8. Or do you have a normal way of speaking and your English friends a funny English accent?

9. Do you wear a kilt?

10. Do you possess a kilt but never wear it?

11. Would you rather be dead than caught wearing a kilt?

12. Would you only wear a kilt on the strict understanding that nobody else Scottish was present?

13. Like, at an English wedding in the far end of Cornwall, where you could be the token Scotsman in the kilt that always seems to



Miles Kington

turn up at these events?

14. Do you go all funny when you hear the sound of the pipes?

15. When you see a man in the street playing the pipes and wearing, not tartan, but jeans and a sweater, what is your reaction? a) He is not properly dressed; b) What does it matter how he is dressed as long as he plays well?; c) What a bloody racket.

16. When you hear a man with a name like Lord Fraser of Dundreary on the radio saying, in a Knightsbridge accent: "Well, look here, I am a Scot through and

through ..." do you throw up or do you think, "Well, we need all the allies we can get?"

17. When England is playing Scotland, do you want the best side to win?

18. When England is playing Germany, who do you want to win?

19. Where is Belorussia?

20. What do you mean, it doesn't matter where it is as long as we stuffed them?

21. Do you think it is tragic that even when Scotland has a good football side, they still lose to England when it really matters?

22. Do you think it is tragic that even when England has a good football team, they still lose to Germany when it really matters?

23. Do you think it is wonderful that even when Germany has a good team, they still lose to Brazil?

24. Do you think it is tragic that Scots always remember their defeats better than their victories?

25. Do you go around saying that Scotland has the best educational and legal system in the world, even though you don't believe it?

26. Are you proud to belong to a nation which is told it has the worst diet in the world?

27. Do you think a nation which can't even improve the worst diet in the world can make a go of democracy?

28. Can you name another Scottish drink besides Irn-Bru and whisky?

29. Do you feel ashamed that the best-known prize at the Edinburgh Festival is named after a French fizzy drink?

30. And has never been won by a Scottish performer?

31. Or did Arnold Brown win it one year?

32. And if he did, why doesn't he have a Scottish name?

33. Do you feel offended that the English think that Shakespeare's only Scottish play is desperately unlucky?

34. Do you ... Ah! We've come to the head of the queue. Time to vote. The answer to the quiz, by the way, is that if you answered the first question ("Just how Scottish are you, really?") with a phrase meaning something like "Mind your own bloody English business," then you are.

business & city

FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

German spurt boosts single currency hopes

Inre Karacs
Bonn
Katherine Butler
Brussels

Germany has moved within sight of the fiscal targets laid down by the Maastricht Treaty, increasing pressure on other would-be members of European monetary union to rein in public spending.

With better than expected figures on German government finances yesterday providing a tonic for Europe's single currency hopes, the European Commission President, Jacques Santer, said plans for a single currency were beyond the point of no return and critics should

end their "diatribe of doubt".

The Nobel prize-winning economist Milton Friedman became the latest to add his voice to the chorus of EMU-doubters yesterday, warning in a German newspaper that Europe, with its diverse languages, traditions, industries and labour markets would not be ready for currency union on 1 January 1999.

But in a strongly worded statement Mr Santer labelled such comment "irresponsible" and insisted delay was not only unnecessary but legally impossible. Calling for an end to speculation, Mr Santer said he was convinced a "substantial" number of countries would meet the qualifying targets on time.

Thanks to a recovery in economic activity in recent months, Germany's prospects of meeting the required targets look brighter than they have for some time.

The government's budget deficit fell to 3.1 per cent of GDP in the first half of this year. With growth accelerating and tax revenues increasing, analysts now believe Germany is on course to hit the target figure of 3.0 per cent for the whole of 1997.

Two sets of official figures published yesterday underpin renewed hopes that Germany will fulfil all but one of the Maastricht criteria without undue fudging. To the surprise of all observers, including government

officials, the Federal Statistics Office reported that last year's government budget deficit had been 3.5 per cent - 0.3 percentage points lower than previous estimates. In the first half of this year, despite the sluggish economy and mass lay-offs, the deficit shrank to 3.1 per cent.

Some of the improvement was due to the adoption of EU accounting standards, which exclude investment in hospitals from government expenditure. Even so, the figures show that the deficit in the first half of 1997 was 0.3 points lower than the corresponding period last year.

As the economy picks up, analysts said there was every chance that the government

would deliver the 3 per cent figure in time for the final weigh-in for monetary union. Evidence that the German economy had turned the corner also came from the growth figures issued yesterday by the Statistics Office.

According to these, GDP in the second quarter was 2.9 per cent higher than the corresponding period in 1996. Separate figures from the Bundesbank, adjusted differently, showed pan-German GDP growth of 2 per cent in the year to the second quarter.

Together these suggest that Germany is heading for annual growth of 2.5 per cent, in line with government targets.

However, the recovery is

being driven almost entirely by exports, boosted by the low exchange rate of the mark. Investment in equipment grew only by 0.3 per cent in the second quarter and consumer spending remained in the dumps.

With unemployment still on the rise, there appears little prospect of the long-awaited pick-up in domestic demand.

Nevertheless, meeting the most important Maastricht criteria - although total public debt is still set to climb over the 60 per cent threshold - will save the government a great deal of embarrassment.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, looking upbeat for the first time

in months, said: "We want a stable currency and the euro at the right time, and we have a good chance of achieving that."

He told a rowdy session of the Bundestag yesterday: "There is no alternative."

The implication is that Bonn will now feel able to resume its favourite role as Europe's disciplinarian. It will turn a blind eye to France's performance, close enough to 3 per cent. But Italy's hopes of sneaking in behind a limping Germany have been dimmed.

Nevertheless, Mr Santer insisted that the single currency would go ahead on time. "The end is in sight. This is not the time to frighten off the public

about the solidity of the single currency," he said. Commission lawyers had advised that postponement would in any case be "legally untenable".

Mr Santer admitted that urgent steps had to be taken to tackle Europe's unemployment crisis. He called on EU governments to reduce taxes on employment and raised the prospect instead of new taxes on energy.

It was "crazy" he said that only one in ten of the unemployed were on training schemes and that unemployment benefit was paid out to millions without any corresponding incentive to train or upgrade skills. Mr Santer also said he favoured a reduction in working hours.

Clarke joins UniChem as chairman

Sameena Ahmad

Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer and possibly one of the most unhealthy people in the House of Commons, is joining the board of UniChem, the UK healthcare company, as non-executive chairman. Mr Clarke, who famously prefers a visit to the pub to preparing speeches and smokes out his House of Commons colleagues with his panatella cigars, will earn £120,000 for a maximum two days' work a week.

Having lost to William Hague in the Tory party leadership contest, Mr Clarke can at least console himself that he is now earning the bigger salary. As a full-time leader of the opposition, Mr Hague makes £95,000.

Despite his lifestyle and reputation for toughness, Mr Clarke looks well-suited to a role at UniChem, the pharmacy retailer and wholesaler. "He adores roughing people up... crippled nurses would be right up his street," said a former cabinet colleague.

He cut his teeth as minister in the Department for Health and Social Security from 1982 to 1985. As Secretary of State for Health between 1988 and 1990, he was a key architect of the controversial internal reforms of the National Health Service. After losing the Tory leadership election in May, Mr Clarke was eager to try his hand at business, saying that after telling companies how to run, he wanted to have a go himself. Though he was appointed a non-executive director of Foreign & Colonial Investment Management, he clearly was seeking a more hands-on role. As a Tory MP for

Rushcliffe near Nottingham and a fan of local football, Mr Clarke was also widely tipped to become the next chairman of Nottingham Forest football club. However, Mr Clarke's long time relationship with UniChem won out.

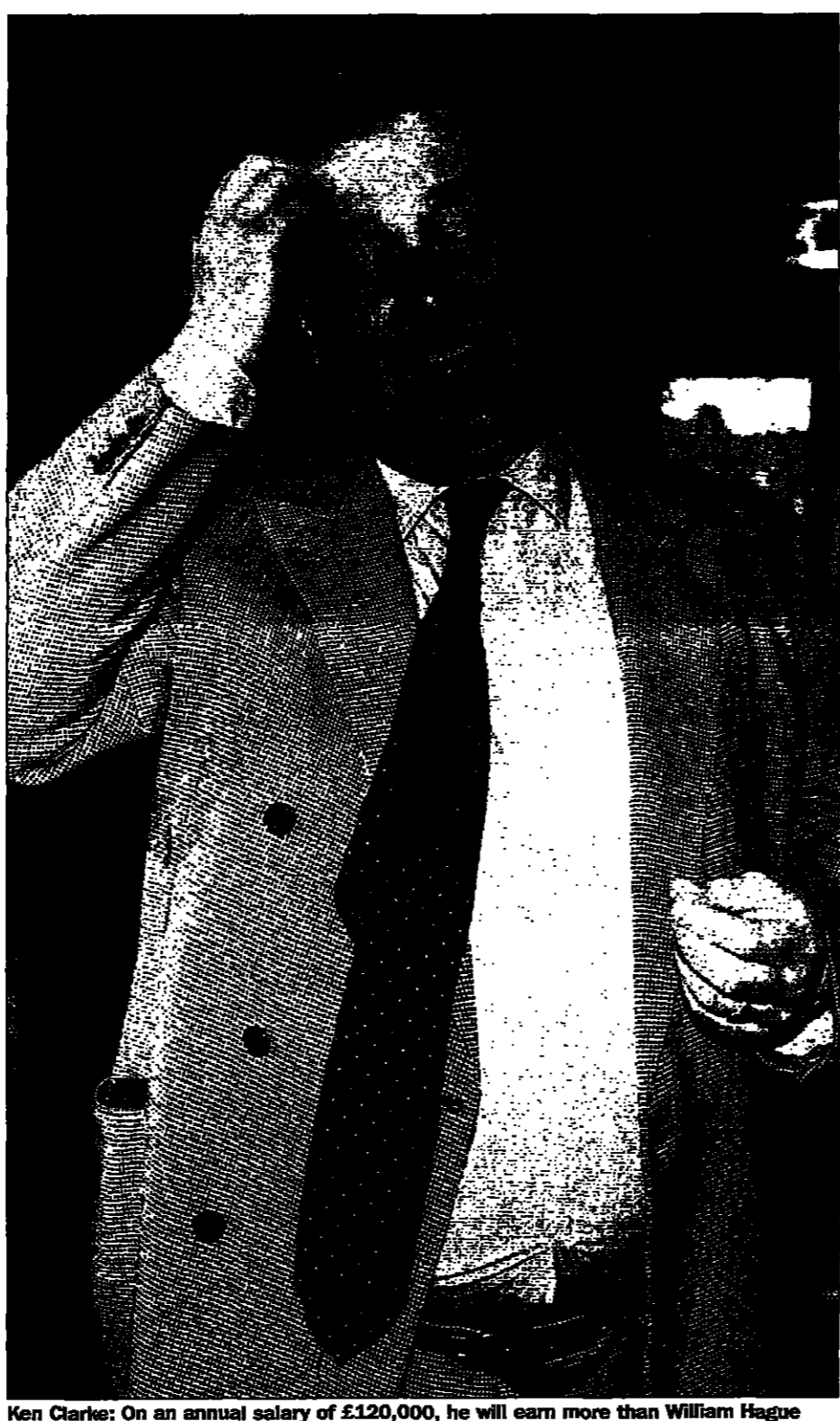
He was great pals with the group's former chairman, Lord Rippon, who died in January. Mr Clarke approached UniChem immediately after the leadership election.

Jeffery Harris, chief executive of UniChem, which runs the Moss Chemist chain of pharmacies, said Mr Clarke's appointment was ideally suited to the group's plans to expand in drug wholesaling Europe. "He has a vast knowledge of the health industry. He has a huge number of personal contacts in Europe."

"He has met up with health ministers in Europe. He's an extremely wise and sensible man and we will value his advice on deals."

Having failed substantially to beef up its retail pharmacy side after losing a £60m bid to take over Lloyds Chemists, Mr Harris said UniChem was now keen to expand its wholesale business in continental Europe. With the group's share price weak after the failed bid, he said UniChem was likely to merge with rather than buy a large wholesaler. Although Gehe is a big wholesaler, he said any friendly deal there was "unlikely".

Wholesaling sales in the six months to June took a £20m hit after Glaxo Wellcome's ulcer drug Zantac went off patent. Sales in the period rose 16 per cent to £833m with profits ahead 8 per cent to £27m.



Ken Clarke: On an annual salary of £120,000, he will earn more than William Hague

Co-op Bank executive calls for review at CWS

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Terry Thomas, managing director of the Co-operative Bank, yesterday ended his outspoken nine-year reign with a call for a radical review of operations at its owner, the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The criticism followed the high-profile and failed attempt by Andrew Regan, the youthful entrepreneur, to take over the mutually owned CWS this year.

The Crown Prosecution Service recently dropped the case against Mr Regan, his business

partner David Lyons and Allan Green, a former CWS executive, to allow police more time to investigate the affair.

Though Mr Thomas declined to comment directly on the events, he suggested the CWS board should compare its fortunes with the growing success of the Co-op Bank. Presenting his last set of financial results before his departure at the end of the month, he revealed a 32 per cent jump in half-yearly pre-tax profits to a record £33m.

Mr Thomas said the CWS was studying a consultants' report on its business delivered a

few days ago. "We hope they'll do a root and branch review," he said. "I'm just confident that they'll put their house in order. They don't need to be told that they cannot continue as they are with them losing market share."

He implied the CWS had drifted from its founding principles. "The significant thing the bank has done is to go back to its roots. Perhaps you can lose the thread a bit. I'm not saying they did that but it's possible."

The Bank yesterday paid tribute to Mr Thomas, who joined the organisation as its first marketing manager in 1973. In the past decade the Co-op Bank has grown rapidly by targeting higher-income customers with products such as gold cards.

Responding to criticism that the Bank had only grown by moving away from its original customer base, Mr Thomas argued the co-operative pioneers were middle class.

"It would be foolish to think they were men of the soil or hewers of rock," he said.

Retail deposits at the bank grew 23 per cent in the six months to 30 July to £2.8bn while average retail lending increased by 11 per cent to £2.2bn. Bad debt provisions rose by 14 per cent to £13.4m, though they were of the same 1.1 per cent proportion of account balances as last year.

Mervyn Pedley, an accountant and management consultant who will take over from Mr Thomas in October, yesterday pledged to maintain the ethical campaigns.

Asked whether the ethical investment stand had won over other banks, Mr Thomas replied: "Unfortunately not." He cited a Co-op Bank conference against land mines, where only five smaller banks agreed to stop doing business with companies involved in the trade.

People & Business, page 21

Mutuals discuss defence tactics

Michael Harrison

The Government came under renewed pressure yesterday to afford the mutual movement more protection from carpathaggers as nearly 200 representatives of building societies, mutual insurers, friendly societies and co-operatives met in London to discuss defence measures.

The one-day conference may prove to be the forerunner to the creation of a more formal alliance to promote the benefits of mutual societies over public companies and lobby for action.

Adrian Coles, director general of the Building Societies Association, urged the Government to introduce secondary legislation to make it more difficult for carpathaggers to seek election to boards of building societies. Measures could include increasing the number of individuals required to nominate a director, an increase in the amount of money needed to qualify as a nominator and an

increase in the turn-out figure required when voting for conversion.

Alastair Lyons, chief executive of National Provident Institution, cautioned: "The voice of mutuality is diverse and that means there is no consistency or coherence in the message. There is an advantage in getting consistency from forums like this."

But he said the best defence against takeover or carpathaggers seeking to force mutuals into conversion was to be competitive. "Mutuals have to demonstrate they add value, not simply act as a protection for inefficient management."

He told delegates that £100 invested every month for 30 years into a with-profits life policy would produce a pot worth £15,000 more in a mutually owned insurer than a plc. "If there is to be a future for mutual life insurers then we have to give greater value for customers than plcs."

Comment, page 17

Care First investors want chief reinstated

Sameena Ahmad

Institutional investors in Care First, the UK's largest nursing home group, are lobbying for the reinstatement of Chai Patel, who quit as chief executive a fortnight ago after a bust up with the group's chairman. It is understood that Mr Patel would consider rejoining the company only if Keith Bradshaw, executive chairman, and Ron Reid, finance director, resign.

Institutions believed to be concerned about Mr Patel's departure include Morgan Stanley, Fidelity, London & Manchester, Abbey Life, National Provident and Invesco, which collectively represent

around 18 per cent of Care First's shares.

Mr Patel, whose Court Cavendish healthcare group merged with Mr Bradshaw's Takara last October, is believed to have walked out because of interference from Mr Bradshaw over strategic decisions. A source close to Mr Patel said: "They just didn't share the same vision and values. Mr Patel had no freedom to act. The amount of cross-checking of his decisions was stifling."

Mr Bradshaw apparently refused to specify to Mr Patel when he would step down to a non-executive role. Mr Patel wants Mr Bradshaw and Mr Reid, both originally from Takara,

go completely before he considers returning.

Many of the institutions who are having meetings with Care First over the next few days regard Mr Patel very highly. One leading fund manager said yesterday: "I very much want to see the reinstatement of Chai Patel. We bought the shares because we believed in his style of management."

The fund manager called on other institutions to make their views plain: "It is now time for the majority owners to have their view."

Takara has been one of the worst performers in a tough sector. Shares in the company have lagged the market by 74 per cent in the last five years.

Train maker to tackle Teutonic inefficiency

Michael Harrison

The world's biggest train manufacturer has dispatched a "hit squad" from Britain to sort out its German operations with a brief to bring them up to UK standards of efficiency and cost competitiveness.

The move by Adtranz, the ABB-Daimler-Benz joint venture which owns the old British Rail Engineering works in Derby, is part of an overall strategy to cut the size of its European workforce by about 5,000.

Since Adtranz was formed in January 1996, it has cut its UK workforce from 8,000 to 3,500 and closed its York manufacturing works, making Britain the group's most efficient production base. Its UK operations, based mainly in Derby, Manchester, Doncaster and Ply-

mouth, are now 50 per cent cheaper than those in Germany, where 8,500 are employed in 11 locations, while UK inventory levels are a sixth of those elsewhere.

Kaare Wagner, chief executive of Adtranz, said: "We have flown our British restructuring team into Germany to do the same thing there that they have done here."

The British team will assess the scope for rationalising the number of plants in Germany and introduce UK-style working systems. This involves project directors with responsibility for the design, development and manufacture of a train rather than the production system being broken up by function.

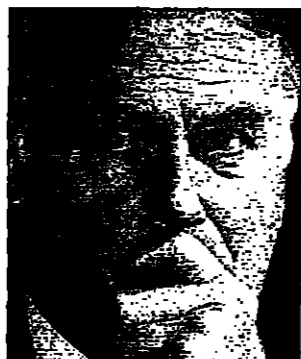
The process is likely to be repeated in some of the group's

Scandinavian operations, notably Denmark, which is also reckoned to suffer from over-manning and excess capacity compared to the size of the home market.

Since the UK restructuring, Adtranz has won the lion's share of the rolling stock orders placed by the privatised rail operators and has also become the favourite location for building trains for export.

The total UK order book stands at £500m, of which about a quarter are export contracts including one deal to supply rolling stock for a new light rail system in Bangkok.

Worldwide, Adtranz has manufacturing operations in 20 countries, a £6bn order backlog and 25,000 employees, of which about 20,000 are in Europe, making it the world's



Sir Alastair Morton: Advising Adtranz on Virgin trains bid

biggest train manufacturer with a 14 per cent share of the global market and 22 per cent of the European market.

Mr Wagner forecast further consolidation and rationalisa-

tion of the rolling stock industry as prices continued to decline.

Ultimately Adtranz has its sights set on a merger with the rolling stock operations of General Electric of the US. The two groups have jointly developed a new freight locomotive called the Blue Tiger and are working together on projects in Latin America, Australia and South Africa.

The next big UK rolling stock order is a £60m contract to supply Virgin with 40 tilting trains for the upgraded West Coast mainline. Adtranz is in competition for the business with GEC-Alsthom and Siemens and is being advised on its bid by Sir Alastair Morton, former co-chairman of Euro-tunnel. Sir Alastair was appointed earlier this month.

Boots pays £175m for German skincare firm

Boots yesterday fulfilled a long-standing ambition to break into the German healthcare market when Boots Healthcare International paid £175m for Merck's medical skincare company, Hermal Kurt Herrmann, writes Nigel Cope.

The deal gives Boots a presence in the £1.6bn German skincare market and follows its move into France last year, when it acquired the French skincare group Lutsia for £115m.

David Thompson, finance director of Boots, said: "This is a significant acquisition for Boots, fulfilling a long-estab-

lished strategic objective to achieve a presence for BHI in Germany. It underlines our confidence in the prospects of the division and our commitment to the long-term growth of the business."

He said the deal was initially expected to be earnings-neutral. Boots said the deal would open up the German market for BHI, its over-the-counter healthcare whose products include Neurofen, Strepsils and the skin cream E45. Boots said it would consider other acquisitions for the business.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low
FTSE 100	4905.20	-45.30	-0.9	5086.80	4056.60
FTSE 250	4884.70	-12.30	-0.3	4729.40	4386.20
FTSE 350	2368.10	-16.80	-0.8	2438.00	2017.90
FTSE SmallCap	2281.17	+1.82	+0.1	2374.20	2178.29
FTSE All-Share	2318.01	-17.10	-0.7	2376.39	1989.78
New York	7792.44	-50.47	-0.6	8298.31	5032.84
Tokyo	18704.77	+8.80	+0.0	20681.07	17303.85
Hong Kong	14809.44	-191.22	-1.3	16673.27	12055.17
Frankfurt	4050.14	-44.25	-1.1	4438.93	2848.77

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
UK	7.08	7.50	8.98	7.88	8.91
US	5.59	6.00	6.38	6.93	8.65
Japan	0.40	0.50	2.08	2.83	-
Germany	3.09	3.58	3.85	6.33	6.31

CURRENCIES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
US	1.5853	-0.42c	1.38	-	-
DM	1.5885	-0.12c	1.5695	-	-
Yen	2.8577	-2.28p	2.8271	-	-
£	189.000	-10.373	170.191	-	-
Index	99.9	-0.5	85.5	-	-

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
Oil Brent	18.35	+0.08	22.48	-	-
Gold	321.20	-0.55	389.55	-	-
Gold	282.54	+0.18	245.67	-	-



COMMENT

Something has to act as a bulwark against the banks and in any case it is obviously a good thing to have some form of alternative to the joint stock company

Mutuals have to show they are worth preserving

It was somehow appropriate that yesterday's love-in for those still wedded and glued to the concept of mutual ownership should have taken place in the sanctity of Church House under the shadow of Westminster Abbey. Like the established church, the movement paddled along quite happily for many years in peaceful obscurity, largely protected from the harsh realities of commercial life. Like the church, many of its advocates have the air of religious zealots, proselytising on behalf of the movement and its ideals at every opportunity. And like the church, the mutual movement is being dragged kicking and screaming into the late 20th century. Both are institutions, if not in turmoil, then certainly in the process of far-reaching and traumatic change.

The impetus for that change is coming from two quarters. First the carpetbaggers who sense that when confronted with the choice between a building society and a bung, members will choose the latter. And second, from within the movement itself for there have been as many mutuals that have converted under their own steam as under the cash of one of the high street banks.

The purpose of yesterday's gathering was to examine how best the process could be slowed, if not stopped. There is little doubt that mutuality is worth preserving. Something has to act as a bulwark against the

banks and in any case it is obviously a good thing to have some form of alternative to the joint stock company.

The question is what form that preservation should take. Two solutions were on offer yesterday. One is to man the barricades and erect every defence mechanism possible. Deter the carpetbaggers by making it much more difficult and much more expensive to seek election to the board of a mutual is one idea. Change the law so that membership does not also bestow voting rights for two years or more is another.

All this rather misses the point however. Physical defences might help halt the advance, but they cannot stop it indefinitely. To survive long term, the remaining building society and life mutuals have to demonstrate they are worth preserving. By attempting to offer a tangible mutual benefit to their customers, some mutuals have made a start. Alastair Lyons of National Provident was championing yesterday that pound for pound, a with-profits life policy operated by a mutual delivers a 12 per cent higher return than the equivalent policy offered by a plc with shareholders to keep happy.

No doubt Norwich Union could find another set of actuaries to challenge his calculations. But NPI's tactics are undoubtedly the sort most likely to persuade members of the value, not just the virtue, of mutuality.

Britain's remaining mutual building societies and life companies need to do far more of this. If they are to survive, they need to go on the offensive.

View looks good from Lord Hollick's chair

Leaning back in his chair in an office with a panoramic view of central London, Lord Hollick was looking rather pleased with himself yesterday. As well he might. Everything seems to be going right for the Labour Peer and media baron right now. As a part-time special adviser to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, he has an unrivalled hearing at the centre of Government and a valuable insight into the workings of the new administration. Meanwhile, back at his day job as chief executive of United News and Media, everything seems to be powering ahead on all fronts. Once sceptical analysts have added him to their buy lists, and while his share price is still well off its peak, it is back on a strongly rising trend.

The boring bit of United, which runs exhibitions and publishes freebie trade magazines, is proving as good a cash generator as they come. Which is fortunate, for the more interesting bits of this curious hotch-potch of media interests seem only too

happy to soak it up. Lord Hollick talks boldly of giving the *Mail* newspapers a run for their money with his *Express* titles and is pouring millions into the pursuit. On that front the jury is out but few in the City are yet questioning his judgement. Meanwhile even Channel 5 is doing better than expected. This was supposed to be a financial black hole in the making. While it is true that a third of the country still can't get access, and media critics continue to give its content a pasting, losses are running lower than forecast and advertisers are voting with their chequebooks. It should easily make a profit in its fourth year, analysts say.

Then there are the opportunities provided by interactive technology of which Lord Hollick, a big user of Internet bookshops and even virtual florists, is a leading exponent. There must be a cloud on the horizon somewhere, of course. But right now, the bearded baron is enjoying the view.

Currency traders make a 180-degree turn

Oops! The currency markets have decided they were wrong about UK interest rates going up and German ones staying unchanged. Traders have now herded towards the opposite view - that German rates will

rise before long while the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee will wisely sit on its hands.

Is this 180-degree turn in sentiment justified? Take the German side of the DM-sterling exchange rate first. The game being played by the Bundesbank is to convince the markets that it will raise the cost of borrowing if it has to - without actually doing so. Higher German interest rates would infuriate politicians, exasperate potential EMU partners and clobber an economic recovery still in its early stages. Stabilising the mark is the priority here. The Bundesbank would prefer not to do anything stronger.

As for the UK, the shift in sentiment rests on three surveys of the high street during a summer when many more Britons than usual were taking a windfall-financed break in foreign parts, and on one underwhelming set of inflation figures. But actually there is not yet any firm evidence that the economy is slowing enough to keep the brakes on inflation.

If this fails to materialise by December, the forex herd could easily stampede back to its original views. There is absolutely no prospect of an interest rate rise at the end of today's two-day meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee. But later in the year? Who knows. The inflationary pressures building up in the economy may prove stronger than suspected.

Job losses predicted as BNFL plans to cut costs

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Staff at British Nuclear Fuels, the state-owned reprocessing and contracting group, were yesterday bracing themselves for news of hundreds of job losses after the company agreed to slash its costs by a quarter over the next four years.

BNFL also said yesterday it expected to conclude negotiations to merge its operations with Magnox Electric, the nuclear generator left in public ownership after last year's privatisation of British Energy, later this autumn. But BNFL repeated that it needed assurances from Magnox and the Government that the merger would not compromise the growth prospects of its existing business.

Despite signing a memorandum of understanding earlier this year agreeing the merger, John Taylor, BNFL's chief executive, admitted the talks had taken longer than anticipated.

The merger was planned after the older Magnox stations were separated from the rest of nuclear privatisation. Magnox Electric will today reveal a substantial cut in its £1.3bn of future decommissioning liabilities which are not covered by investments or guarantees from the taxpayer. Its total anticipated decommissioning liabilities were almost £9bn last year.

The comments came as BNFL confirmed that the cost-cutting programme, called Beyond 2000, would involve redundancies. But the company said no figures had been suggested to staff. The restructuring would save £200m, around 25 per cent of BNFL's controllable costs, by 2000-2001.

Mr Taylor explained: "We haven't set a target for job numbers yet. We're going to talk this through with the workforce. Change is always difficult to deal with but there are many people across the organisation who realise we need to change."

Unions were expecting to hear further details at a joint conference with management in December. Union officials fear the reductions could mean a drop in staff numbers of up to 25 per cent. Last year BNFL's workforce shrank by almost 500, mostly through a voluntary redundancy programme.

The company yesterday revealed a 19 per cent fall in turnover for the year to the end of March to £1.26bn and a corresponding 32 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £216m. BNFL said its dividend payout to the Treasury would be halved to £46m. The reductions came from the planned shutdown of the Magnox fuel reprocessing plant at Sellafield and lower-than-expected deliveries of Magnox fuel after problems at one of the generator's reactors.

Mr Taylor said the results, excluding the shutdown, had beaten targets, with savings of £60m through BNFL's efficiency drive. Despite the drop, BNFL's annual report showed Mr Taylor was paid a £61,425 annual bonus last year. Coupled with £65,163 of other benefits, his total pay, including pension contributions, rose to £372,108.

Pound lower on expectation rates will hold

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The firm expectation that the Bank of England will not announce any change in interest rates after its Monetary Policy Committee finishes meeting today helped the pound sharply lower yesterday.

Alongside better-than-expected news about the German economy, it took the pound more than two pence lower to DM2.85, the weakest for nearly three months.

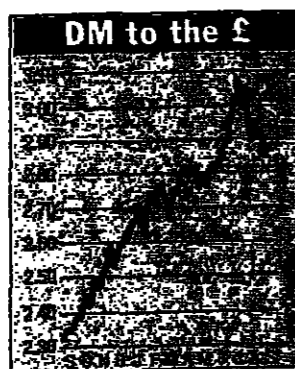
"The rise in the pound was predicated on a strong divergence between the German and UK economies," said Paul Meggery of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

The most recent surveys on the UK economy have hinted at the start of a slowdown in booming consumer spending. In addition, figures this week showed inflation declining closer to the target of 2.5 per cent.

The Bank of England stated last month it thought rates had risen enough for the time being.

There has been nothing in the recent figures to alter the picture, bringing mortgage payers a welcome respite.

Analysis said yesterday that



this did not mean a future increase in UK interest rates could be ruled out. Nor were they convinced that the pound would continue to fall.

"The markets could call the Bundesbank's bluff on German interest rates, and if they did not raise rates that would give the pound a new lease of life," said Gerard Lyons, chief economist at DKB.

Separately, the British Chambers of Commerce said yesterday its members wanted the UK to join the single European currency with a delay, but nevertheless as close as possible to the planned 2002 introduction of the Euro notes and coins.

Norwich Union plc Interim Statement

The following table shows the results for the 52 weeks period immediately before flotation reflect our trading performance. These results have been restated on the same basis as in the recent annual statement. The results for the first part of 1997, whilst we have also achieved a strong performance, are not yet finalised and will be published after the completion of the flotation process.

Allan Bridgewater, Group Chief Executive

	Unaudited 24 weeks to 15.09.97 £m	Prospectus 52 weeks to 31.12.96 £m
Gross premium income		
Long term business	1,125.2	1,125.2
General business	1,125.2	1,125.2
Total gross premiums	2,250.4	2,250.4
Operating earnings		
Balance transferred from long term business technical account	1,125.2	1,125.2
Balance transferred from general business technical account	1,125.2	1,125.2
Investment income after expenses	1,125.2	1,125.2
Investment return allocated to the general business technical account	1,125.2	1,125.2
Other	1,125.2	1,125.2
Operating earnings before taxation	2,250.4	2,250.4
Realised investment gains / (losses)	1,125.2	1,125.2
Unrealised investment gains / (losses)	1,125.2	1,125.2
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	2,250.4	2,250.4
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	1,125.2	1,125.2
Minority interests	1,125.2	1,125.2
Profit attributable to shareholders	1,125.2	1,125.2
Earnings per share		
Earnings per ordinary share	1,125.2	1,125.2
Operating earnings per ordinary share	1,125.2	1,125.2

■ UK life & pensions - technical account profit of £213m and voted Company of the Year by IFAs (Money Marketing survey - March).

■ UK general insurance - technical account profit of £37m in a difficult market reflects continuing emphasis on profit rather than volume.

■ International businesses - technical account profit of £4m with improved long term business results in Australia, France and Ireland and profitable general insurance results in New Zealand, Spain and Ireland.

■ Funds under management up to £46.7bn (end 1996: £40.2bn).

■ Life embedded value £3.9bn (end 1996: £3.6bn) and shareholders' net assets £4.9bn (end 1996: £4.5bn).

This advertisement contains only a summary of the Interim Statement. To receive a copy of the full Statement, please complete and return the coupon.

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No instant gratification, but the Williams outlook is good

Williams, once known as a conglomerate, has worked hard to reinvent itself as the wind of stock market fashion has turned against its old sector. The group has dropped motor dealing, engineering, electronics and a large chunk of its building products business, turning very handsy profits for shareholders in the process.

Meanwhile, April's £1.3bn acquisition of Chubb has given tangible backing to the claims by Williams' chairman, Sir Nigel Rudd, that he is now determined to focus on security and fire protection. Earlier this month, these efforts resulted in Williams finally being reclassified as a support services company. And the transformation was crowned yesterday by the announcement that its membership of the FTSE 100 index has been restored.

Despite this tour de force, the recent run in the shares has been driven more by hopes that the group would accompany its interim announcement yesterday with news of further disposals and a share buy-back. The lack of instant gratification on either score sent the shares down 15.5p to 359p, even though it is clear that moves are afoot.

Authority for a share buy-back will be put to shareholders later this year, while a sale of the Polyfills to US decorative paints home improvements division was not being ruled either in or out by Sir Nigel yesterday. Analysts are suggesting

that Nutone, a US electrical goods installer, could go whatever happens, although forecasts that the whole division could eventually fetch as much as £900m may prove optimistic.

Corporate moves aside, the Chubb integration appears to be, if anything, running ahead of expectations. Cost savings, which have seen 300 jobs go so far, and the benefits of showing more of Chubb's products through Williams' existing Yale and Kidde distribution networks are on course to hit the target of adding £40m to profits by the end of next year.

Longer term, there should be more to go for, with Chubb's strong positions in the fast growing security and fire protection markets of the Far East and Australia complementing Yale and Kidde in the Americas and Europe. Williams has yet to prove it can capitalise on these possibilities though.

Stripping out acquisitions and exchange effects, underlying profits growth of 5 per cent in fire protection and 6 per cent in security was eclipsed by the supposedly non-core home improvement operation, which recorded a sparkling 13 per cent advance.

The market outlook is good, but the group's warning that the removal of advance corporation tax credits will cost an extra £9m a year in extra pension fund contributions caused full-year forecasts to

be shaved a little yesterday. Still, assuming profits of £280m, the shares, on a forward multiple of 16, falling to 14, look reasonable value, particularly against rivals in Sweden and the US on p/e ratios in the 30s.

ABP has plans but few details

Associated British Ports, captained by long-standing chairman Sir Keith Stuart, has sailed into troubled waters in recent months. Investors have become increasingly fed up with disappointing profits growth and poor returns from new investments. After

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

all, ABP owns most of the UK's biggest and most prosperous trade gateways to the sea and should be cashing in as the economy booms. But yesterday's interim results showed a mere 5 per cent rise in port operating profits to £101m for the six months to June.

The group took the opportunity to unveil plans for a strategic review in an attempt to stave off a shareholder revolt. However ABP's announcement was long on rhetoric and short on details. The group hinted it would look for overseas acquisitions or joint ventures or pos-

sibly extend its port activities and start handling distribution operations on behalf of their clients. But nothing is definite and any new plans will not be known until next March at the earliest.

What we do know is that ABP will get out of non-port property developments. It claims that it has been doing so for years. Strange then that its balance sheet shows a recent rise in the amount of port-located properties it holds.

Whatever the result of the strategic review, ABP appears to have ruled out the one measure that

would be a sure-fire way to pep up the share price, namely a share buy-back or special dividend. The 17.5p share price fell to 275p reflects investors' disappointment.

That said, shareholders should stick in there. Sir Keith Stuart has recently appointed an outsider, Andrew Smith, to head up the ports division, which should provide an added impetus for change. Meanwhile profits should continue to rise steadily. UBS, the broker, is forecasting full-year profits of £102m, putting the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 14, where they are supported by a forecast yield of 4.1 per cent. Hold.

Fast progress by Courtaulds

Britain's battered textile industry may be finally off the critical list if the latest set of results are any guide. On Monday Dewhurst, a dedicated supplier to Marks & Spencer, reported a healthy rise in profits from clothing sales. Yesterday it was the turn of Courtaulds Textiles, the leading supplier of lingerie to M&S.

Since last June's replacement of chief executive Noel Jervis with Colin Dyer, the group has made fast progress in harsh markets. As well as weak demand and falling textile

margins across the industry, Courtaulds' own headhunts have been its lace and stretch fabric divisions, a third of total sales, and Wells, a French hosiery business.

Happily the group's restructuring plan, which should save some £10m a year by the end of 1998, is paying off. There was a £31.7m provision in the 1996 figures for closing eight businesses, including UK lace production, cutting 350 jobs and shifting production overseas. The impact is clear in yesterday's interim numbers. On sales to June down a touch at £421m, profits recovered to £110.4m from a loss, including restructuring costs, of £8.5m last time. Half time margins move from 3.2 to 3.2 per cent. With demand for lace weak, Courtaulds is scaling back its US business and focusing on the stronger French and Spanish markets.

Meanwhile stretch fabrics, used for everything from underwear to car seat covers, is going great guns. Business with M&S, around 35 per cent of the total, is sprightly and set to grow, while lingerie and hosiery is benefiting from more overseas sourcing and a more global focus.

A combination of improving demand and further restructuring benefits should ensure continuing improvement. BZW forecasts £37.3m for the full year, including £3m of further exceptional gains. That puts the shares, up 4p at 335p, on a forward p/e ratio of 14, which looks about right against the sector. Hold.

New Savings Rates from Bristol & West.

EFFECTIVE 11TH SEPTEMBER 1997 (unless otherwise stated).
† Effective 19TH SEPTEMBER 1997.

ACCOUNT	AMOUNT INVESTED	GROSS RATE OF INTEREST PA* (VARIABLE)	NET PA**	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT INVESTED	GROSS RATE OF INTEREST PA* (VARIABLE)	NET PA**
INSTANT ACCESS	£100,000+	4.40%	3.52%	120 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT	£100,000+	6.45%	5.16%
	£50,000+	4.40%	3.52%	Interest paid annually.	£50,000+	6.20%	4.96%
	£25,000+	4.20%	3.36%	(No longer available)	£25,000+	6.10%	4.88%
	£10,000+	3.90%	3.12%		£10,000+	6.00%	4.80%
	£5,000+	3.50%	2.80%		£5,000+	5.85%	4.68%
	£2,000+	3.10%	2.48%		£2,500+	4.50%	3.60%
	£1,000+	2.75%	2.20%		£1,000+	4.45%	3.56%
	£500+	2.55%	2.04%				
	£1+	0.20%	0.16%				
MONTHLY SAVER	£5,000+	3.55%	2.84%	120 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT	£100,000+	6.27%	5.01%
	£2,500+	3.55%	2.84%	Interest paid monthly.	£50,000+	6.03%	4.82%
	£1,000+	3.50%	2.80%	(No longer available)	£25,000+	5.94%	4.75%
	£500+	3.45%	2.76%		£10,000+	5.84%	4.67%
	£1+	3.35%	2.68%		£5,000+	5.70%	4.56%
					£2,500+	4.41%	3.53%
					£1,000+	4.36%	3.49%
90 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT	£100,000+	6.40%	5.12%	BONUS TESSA	£3000+	5.55%	
Interest paid annually.	£50,000+	6.10%	4.88%	(No longer available).	£500+	4.05%	
	£25,000+	5.85%	4.68%		£1+	1.00%	
	£10,000+	5.60%	4.48%				
	£5,000+	5.20%	4.16%				
	£2,500+	4.45%	3.56%				
	£500+	3.95%	3.16%				
90 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT	£100,000+	6.22%	4.98%	PREMIER TESSA	£9,000+	6.90%	
Interest paid monthly.	£50,000+	5.94%	4.75%	(FOLLOW UP) (Issues 1 & 2)	£5,000+	6.60%	
	£25,000+	5.70%	4.56%	(No longer available).	£3,000+	6.60%	
	£10,000+	5.46%	4.37%		£500+	4.80%	
	£5,000+	5.08%	4.06%		£1+	1.00%	
	£2,500+	4.36%	3.49%	PREMIER RESERVE BOND	£1,000+	6.30%	5.04%
	£500+	3.88%	3.10%				
ONE YEAR OPTION BOND	£100,000+	6.85%	5.48%	CHARITY ACCOUNT	£1+		2.48%
Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest annually.	£50,000+	6.85%	5.48%	(No longer available)			
	£25,000+	6.75%	5.40%				
	£10,000+	6.70%	5.36%	CHILDREN'S ACCOUNT	£1+	2.90%	2.32%
	£5,000+	6.55%	5.24%	(No longer available)			
ONE YEAR OPTION BOND	£100,000+	6.64%	5.32%	FULLY PAID SHARE	£50,000+	3.11%	2.48%
Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest monthly.	£50,000+	6.64%	5.32%	(Rates also apply to Cheshunt Investment Share, Cheshunt Clubs, Cheshunt Ex-Thrift and Cheshunt Subs. Share, all no longer available).	£25,000+	2.96%	2.37%
	£25,000+	6.55%	5.24%		£10,000+	2.67%	2.13%
	£10,000+	6.50%	5.20%		£5,000+	2.33%	1.86%
	£5,000+	6.36%	5.09%		£2,000+	2.03%	1.62%
					£500+	1.24%	0.99%
					£1+	0.20%	0.16%
TESSA PLUS	£3,000+	6.70%		SELECT	£50,000+	3.15%	2.52%
	£500+	5.20%		(No longer available).	£25,000+	3.00%	2.40%
	£1+	1.50%			£10,000+	2.70%	2.16%
					£5,000+	2.35%	1.88%
					£2,000+	2.05%	1.64%
					£500+	1.25%	1.00%
					£1+	0.20%	0.16%
TESSA TWO	£9,000+	6.90%					
(FOLLOW UP) (Issues 1 & 2)	£5,000+	6.60%					
	£3,000+	6.60%					
	£500+	4.80%					
PREMIER SAVER	£100,000+	5.40%	4.32%				
An instant access account for investors who limit their access over a 12 month period. (No longer available.)	£50,000+	5.40%	4.32%				
(No Withdrawals).	£25,000+	5.20%	4.16%				
	£10,000+	4.90%	3.92%				
	£5,000+	4.60%	3.60%				
	£2,000+	4.10%	3.28%				
	£1,000+	3.75%	3.00%				
	£500+	3.55%	2.84%				
(1-6 Withdrawals)	£100,000+	4.40%	3.52%				
	£50,000+	4.40%	3.52%				
	£25,000+	4.20%	3.36%				
	£10,000+	3.90%	3.12%				
	£5,000+	3.50%	2.80%				
	£2,000+	3.10%	2.48%				
	£1,000+	2.75%	2.20%				
	£500+	2.55%	2.04%				
(More than 6 Withdrawals)	£100,000+	3.15%	2.52%				
(Rates also apply to Premier Save Bond Issue 4 - no longer available).	£50,000+	3.15%	2.52%				
	£25,000+	3.00%	2.40%				
	£10,000+	2.70%	2.16%				
	£5,000+	2.35%	1.88%				
	£2,000+	2.05%	1.64%				
	£1,000+	1.25%	1.00%				
	£500+	1.25%	1.00%				
PREMIER PLUS CAPITAL ISSUE 1	£100,000+	6.40%	5.12%				
Three months notice required for withdrawal. (Rates also apply to Guaranteed Investment Account Issue 5 and Guaranteed Investment Account Extra Issues 1 & 2.)	£50,000+	6.10%	4.88%				
(No longer available).	£25,000+	5.85%	4.68%				
	£10,000+	5.60%	4.48%				
	£5,000+	5.20%	4.16%				
	£2,000+	4.45%	3.56%				
	£500+	3.95%	3.16%				
PREMIER PLUS MONTHLY INCOME	£100,000+	6.22%	4.98%				
Issue 1	£50,000+	5.94%	4.75%				
Three months notice required for withdrawal, and interest paid monthly. (No longer available).	£25,000+	5.70%	4.56%				
	£10,000+	5.46%	4.37%				
	£5,000+	5.08%	4.06%				
	£2,000+	4.36%	3.49%				
	£500+	3.88%	3.10%				
PREMIER TWELVE	£100,000+	6.85%	5.48%				
Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest annually.	£50,000+	6.85%	5.48%				
(No longer available).	£25,000+	6.75%	5.40%				
	£10,000+	6.70%	5.36%				
	£5,000+	6.55%	5.24%				
PREMIER TWELVE	£100,000+	6.64%	5.32%				
Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest monthly.	£50,000+	6.64%	5.32%				
(No longer available).	£25,000+	6.55%	5.24%				
	£10,000+	6.50%	5.20%				
	£5,000+	6.36%	5.09%				

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Norwich Union keen to shake off takeover rumours

Nic Ciccitti
Personal Finance Editor

Norwich Union, the recently floated life and general insurer, yesterday reaffirmed its commitment to remaining independent as it announced operating profits of £288m for the last 24 weeks before its stock market debut in June.

The insurer has been dogged by takeover rumours since its plans to list on the stock market were announced last year, with Halifax, the former building society turned bank, touted as its most likely predator.

However, Allan Bridgewater, chief executive at Norwich Union, said his company had received no takeover approaches from any organisation.

Meanwhile, Norwich Union's entry to the FTSE 100 index of top UK companies was confirmed yesterday. The shares are expected to join the Footsie on 22 September.

Richard Harvey, who takes over from Mr Bridgewater as chief executive later this year, said of the rumours: "I think it is very much a feature of the marketplace that we are in. We do not find it disconcerting."

The company's pre-tax profits of £335m, which compared with £528m for the whole of



Richard Harvey: Takes over as chief executive this year

1996, were broadly in line with analysts' forecasts. A final dividend for the period ending 31 December will be paid in June next year. Norwich shares gave a muted response to the results, dropping 7.5p to 341p.

Mr Bridgewater ruled out the possibility of Norwich hitting the acquisition trail: "We have no need to make acquisitions. We have a good spread of business and a good spread of distribution."

UK life and pensions contributed £213m to profits with new business growth of 17 per cent compared to the same period last year, single-premium business up 20 per cent and reg-

ular-premium income up 10 per cent.

The UK general insurance business produced a £37m operating profit, although Mr Bridgewater conceded that the bottom of the underwriting cycle, in which premiums have been driven down by competition in the household and motor insurance market, had been "flatter and longer" than Norwich Union had anticipated.

"We were a little bit disappointed with the ability of the market to take premium increases," Mr Bridgewater said. "We're probably a few months further behind in the cycle than we would have thought."

The private motor insurance market was showing signs of improvement and rates had been increased, but no upturn in motor fleet rates is expected until the end of the year. Household insurance rates are also static, though Norwich Union hopes to push some increases through later this year.

Underwriting results were slightly better than in 1996 but subsidence claims, at £11m, were ahead of last year's levels. The group's direct operation, Norwich Union Direct, now has some 550,000 customers, a rise of around 200,000 over last year.

Coopers' fee income rises 10%

Roger Trapp

Booming corporate activity helped Coopers & Lybrand, the UK's largest firm of accountants and management consultants, increase fee income by nearly 10 per cent last year.

A 17 per cent rise in corporate finance revenue was a key factor in the improvement, which saw gross UK fee income for 1996-97 grow 9 per cent to £766m. However, the firm also reported in its annual review published yesterday a 7 per cent increase in fees from audit and accounting, a sector that has been hit by intense price competition in recent years. As an auditor to 30 companies in the FTSE 100, the firm claims to have retained a clear lead over the rest of the field.

Peter Smith, chairman, attributed the firm's performance to a global reach that was "second to none" and said the organisation was focusing on market sectors and evolving its range of services.

Further evidence of the general buoyancy in the profession is seen in today's announcement by BDO Stoy Hayward, a second-tier firm specialising in advising growing businesses, of a 6.1 per cent increase in fee income. Managing partner Adrian Martin said Stoy was benefiting from "a clear focus and single-minded purpose - to continue to build the firm through providing advice to growing businesses and the people behind them".</

Data Bank

FTSE 100	4905.2	-45.3
FTSE 250	4664.7	-12.3
FTSE 350	2368.1	-18.8
SEAQ VOLUME	704.3m shares	
38,274 bargains		
Gilt Index	97.34	unch

Share spotlight



Bizarre stories emerge as Footsie continues to drift

As Footsie continued its lacklustre drift the stock market had to resort to bizarre stories to generate interest.

A cash call by a German bank was enough to get one circulating - a bid for a British financial group, National Westminster Bank, or at least part of it, was identified as the likely target.

The German bank is Commerzbank and its intended victim was said to be NatWest's troubled securities arm. Although few professed to believe the story it did allow NatWest shares to buck a falling market, gaining 11.5p to 824p.

The bank has had a difficult year with poor profits and high-profile problems at its securities side. It has held what it called "exploratory" merger talks with two groups, thought to be Abbey National and Prudential Corporation.

The struggling bank has, however, denied it plans to sell

its securities business, where it is undertaking a revamping exercise.

Commerzbank is thought to be keen to develop its London operation, which includes fund manager Jupiter Tyndall. It is raising around £700m through a rights issue and has said the cash is earmarked for its investment banking side. The German bank does not have a significant London securities operation, an area which has attracted its rivals, Deutsche and Dresdner.

Footsie fell a further 45.3 points to 4905.2, making an 89 fall this week. A raft of largely encouraging company results failed to make any overall impression. The FTSE 250 index fell back but the FTSE Small-Caps index provided a flicker of encouragement, gaining 1.6 to 2,281.2.

The Footsie changes were as expected. Norwich Union, Billiton, Woolwich, Sun Life and



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Provincial (up 8.5p to 420p) and Williams were promoted, replacing Tate & Lyle, Hanson, Imperial Tobacco, Mercury Asset Management and Burnham Castrol.

Drug shares were under the weather with Glaxo Wellcome off 36p to 1,249p and Smith-Kline Beecham 19p to 530p. Worries about US drug profits, its created the anxiety and Glaxo also had to contend with unexpected delays over the switch of its Bonasone allergy drug from prescription to over-the-counter sales.

Biocompatibles International continued to demonstrate the market's reluctance to take prisoners, crashing an-

other 182.5p to 550p on the failure of its link with Johnson & Johnson to materialise. But Shield Diagnostic rose 35p to 642.5p, highest since April, and Drew Scientific put on 6p to 140p on hopes of an encouraging presentation with tomorrow's interim results.

Croda International, the chemical group, rose 10.5p to 368.5p with Dresdner Kleinwort Benson producing what it called a "strong" buy note; Cadbury Schweppes fell 5.5p to 588p, reflecting negative comments from Societe Generale Strauss Turnbull.

TI, the engineer, edged forward 2.5p to 610.5p with Panmure Gordon describing it as

a "premium growth stock".

Pison, the hand-held computer maker, hardened 17p to 419.5p after disclosing it had licensed its EPOC32 operating system to Philips, which intends to use it for a range of data and messaging products.

Airtours, the holidays group, shaded 5p to 1,162.5p on whispers that its bigger rival Thomson was planning a major push. Limestone, the bathroom to kitchens group, fell 3p to 64.5p; the shares were floated at 175p in November. Interim figures today are expected to be poor and there is talk of a capital injection by founder Stephen Boler and a rights issue.

Trinity International, the scene of boardroom strife, fell 1p to 11p after the budget music concern said a bid may appear but not at "a significant premium" to the market price.

JXCC Oil & Gas rose 7p to 52p as the Ukrainian state oil company seemed to under-

mine the agreed bid from Ramco Energy. The Ukrainians acquired a near 11 per cent JXCC stake at 52p, some 6p above the Ramco offer. It is unclear whether the counter-move is an attempt to get a higher price or is aimed at preventing Ramco getting full control.

Hanover International, the hotel chain, edged forward 5p to 140p on talk of a Jarvis Hotels strike, and Fitch hardened to 47p as Sir Terence Conran lifted his stake in the design group to 25.79 per cent. London & Metropolitan, a loss-making property group, came in for a speculative run, rising 2.75p to 7.5p, highest since June. The company has made losses of more than £10m over the past three years. Interim figures are due next month.

La Senza, the lingerie chain which came to market last year at 150p, fell a further 7p to 31.5p.

Britton, the packaging group developed by two former merchant bankers, could soon be a takeover target. There is market talk that an offer of around 120p is being prepared with API said to be the interested party. Britton was once an acquisitive group. Then a shock warning that its interim figures, due later this month, would be disappointing devastated its shares. The price has rallied to 71p from the 51p hit on the warning; last year it was 155.5p.

Enxet International rose 3.5p to 33.25p, a high. The excitement stems from hopes that the company will exercise its option to acquire 95 per cent of a zinc deposit in Kazakhstan. Results of the exploration work Enxet has carried out are thought to be highly encouraging.

Taking Stock

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex rights: Ex dividend: Ex all: Unlisted Securities Market: A suspended: Partly Paid: PM: Paid Shares: A: All Stock. Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Simply dial 0800 123 333, and when prompted to do so, enter the 4-digit code listed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0800 123 333. For details of the two-digit codes below.

FTSE 100 - Real-time	00	Starting Rates	04	Pre-emption Issues	30
UK Company News	01	Button Report	05	Water Shares	31
Foreign Exchange	02	Wall St Report	06	Electricity Shares	32
Tokyo Market	03	High Street Banks	07	High Street Banks	33

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Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
BT	10000	Waters	50000	Shell	50000
British Telecom	10000	Waters	50000	Shell	50000
Waters	50000	Shell	50000	Shell	50000
Shell	50000	Shell	50000	Shell	50000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 4923.2 up 18	11.00 4923.2 down 0.4	14.00 4923.2 down 0.4
09.00 4923.2 up 18	12.00 4923.2 down 0.4	15.00 4923.2 down 0.4
10.00 4923.2 up 18	13.00 4923.2 down 0.4	16.00 4923.2 down 0.4

Telecommunications

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Retailers, Food

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Retailers, General

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Printing & Paper

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Pharmaceuticals

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Property

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Support Services

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Tobacco

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Transport

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Water

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Rights Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

Recent Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50
BT	100.00	+0.50	BT	100.00	+0.50

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Channel 5 beats expectations on viewing figures

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Losses at Channel 5, the terrestrial television channel launched at the end of March, are lower than analysts have been expecting while audience share and advertising revenues are higher.

Channel 5 recorded a loss of £23m in its first three months on top of the £215.5m of start-up costs which have already been written off by its four shareholders.

The figures were released yesterday along with half-year results from United News & Media, which owns a 29 per cent stake in Channel 5. Its share of the first three months' losses was £6.7m.

The channel, whose launch was dogged by problems, now reaches 65 per cent of the country. Its audience share is 5 per cent in homes that can access it and 3 per cent nationwide.

Support from advertisers has been encouraging with annualised revenues running at £85m. This is much higher than even the top end of City expectations and will reassure analysts who have expressed concerns that Channel 5 would prove a financial black hole.

"We are slightly ahead of our expectations," said the company's chief executive, Lord Hollick.

On the basis of yesterday's figures, broker Henderson Crosthwaite has lowered its

forecast of first-year losses from £25m to £20m.

Excluding Channel 5 losses, United News & Media recorded a 15 per cent increase in half-year profits to £174m. Lord Hollick yesterday repeated his call for a fairer system on the way broadcasters were taxed.

He said licence fees paid to the Treasury by the ITV companies could be replaced by a tax on advertising and subscription revenues. This would extend the tax to include satellite broadcaster BSkyB. "Our view is that the tax should be levied fairly and evenly," he said.

"There needs to be a fundamental review," Lord Hollick's comments came as the Independent Television Commission is consulting on the issue. It has asked for industry reaction by 27 September. United News & Media, which was formed as a result of MAI's merger with United News last year, is making progress with operating margins which rose from 15.4 per cent to 18 per cent.

After a year of busy corporate activity, in which United made £1.1bn worth of acquisitions and £400m of disposals, Lord Hollick said the focus this year would switch to organic growth.

The review of HTV, for which United paid £372m earlier this year, will be completed by the end of this month. Cost savings will be reinvested across the

group. Business Services, the exhibitions and trade magazine division which now accounts for 45 per cent of group profits, saw improved performance from Miller Freeman, which now includes the Blenheim Exhibitions group. Profits in the division rose by 70 per cent to £37m.

The consumer publishing arm, which includes the Express newspaper titles, increased underlying profits by 18 per cent to £48m.

Lord Hollick said investment in the Express would continue. With £10m invested so far since the MAI-United merger, a further £10m will be spent on the paper "over the next year or two".

Lord Hollick said the move towards a seven-day operation had worked well but more funds would be invested in the Sunday title.

"We are going to give the Mail a real run for its money over the next five years," he said.

The falling cost of newsprint boosted the group's bottom line by £10m but currency factors cost the group £5m while the rest was offset by development activity.

The financial services division, which includes the money-broker operation, saw profits fall by 13 per cent to £27.5m.

Group margins improved from 15 per cent to 18 per cent. Net debt stands at £1bn. The interim dividend is 11p. The shares rose 27.5p to 746p.



Lord Hollick: 'We are going to give the Mail a real run for its money over the next five years'

MIN profits rise to £13.6m

Nigel Cope

Midland Independent Newspapers, which is the subject of an agreed £297m takeover bid from Mirror Group, reported a sharp rise in half-year profits yesterday and said it did not expect the deal to be blocked by the competition authorities.

The deal is being scrutinised by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, which is due to report its findings to the Department of Trade and Industry at the end of this month. "There is no precedent for a deal like this being blocked," said MIN's chief executive, Chris Oakley.

MIN, which owns 44 newspaper titles including the Birmingham Post, Evening Mail and Coventry Telegraph, reported a 64 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £13.6m for the six months to 29 June. The figures exclude £2.1m of exceptional charges caused by redundancy costs and £900,000 of advisers' fees relating to the Mirror Group deal.

Profits were also boosted by first-time contributions from the acquisitions in May of the Huddersfield Times and Loughborough Echo titles. These added £5.7m to half-year turnover.

Though sales of its flagship titles were flat or showed slight declines, circulation revenue increased by £300,000 to £11m, helped by cover price increases. Profits were boosted by a sharp fall in the cost of newsprint which put £2m on the bottom line in the half year. Advertising revenue increased by 24.5 per cent with recruitment advertising strong.

Mr Oakley said a loyalty scheme for the Birmingham Mail was working well. There are 45,000 holders of a loyalty card which offers money off a range of retailers as well as a retrospective rebate for people who buy the Mail all week.

Birmingham Live, the joint venture television company with Mirror Group, has attracted 200,000 viewers. MIN's share of station's first-half losses was £177,000. MIN said it was part of three consortia bidding for three radio new licences which are set to be granted by the Radio Authority.

Independent Newspapers drops out of running for Fairfax

Independent Newspapers, the Irish-based media group, yesterday ruled itself out of the running for Fairfax, the Australian newspaper empire, the future ownership of which has been put in doubt by Kerry Packer's recent announcement that he was selling down his stake in the company.

Independent Newspapers,

chaired by Dr Tony O'Reilly, has been linked with attempts to purchase Fairfax in the past, but this time round it says it will not be pursuing possible openings.

Announcing record profits for the first six months of this year, Liam Healy, chief executive of Independent Newspapers, said: "The price is too high for

a mature newspaper group and we would not be interested."

In the half year to the end of June, Independent Newspapers increased its pre-tax profits from IR£25.6m to IR£39m, thanks mainly to a first-time contribution from the group's recently acquired newspaper interests in New Zealand, Wilson & Horton.

However, there was strong growth throughout the group, and according to some forecasts in the City, where the group has attracted a significant investment following profits may top IR£100m for the year as a whole.

Dr O'Reilly said: "The results for the group for the full year are expected to show a worth-

while improvement over 1996."

In Ireland, where the company owns the country's leading quality daily and Sunday newspapers, there were strong gains both in advertising and circulation revenues. Both titles were able to consolidate and build on their leading positions.

In the UK, progress was made in reducing losses at The

Independent, which is 46 per cent owned by Independent Newspapers, despite the continued price war in the broadsheet market. The company's share of losses fell from IR£2.9m to IR£2.6m.

In local currency terms, there was strong growth in profits from the group's interests both in France and South

Africa. However, the steep decline in the value of the French franc and the South African rand led to a slight reduction in profits from these territories when translated back into the Irish currency.

The board is recommending an interim dividend of 2.6p, an increase of 13 per cent on last year.

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Shares dive as Saltire moves into the red

Andrew Yates

Investors in Saltire, the electronics parts distributor, took fright yesterday, sending the shares plummeting by more than a fifth to 26.5p after the group announced it had plunged into the red in the six months to July and warned that profits for the year would fall well short of expectations.

Saltire plans a management shake-up which will lead to redundancies after being hit by the sharp rise in the value of the pound and continued problems at its Romanian subsidiary which has been badly affected by the country's economic difficulties. It made a pre-tax loss of £1.4m in the first half of the year compared to a profit of £2m the year before.

It is Saltire's third profit warning in a year. The shares have collapsed from 109p a year ago and a high of 370p in 1994.

Tom Long, chairman, said: "These results are very disappointing. We are a small company and economic ill winds hit us more severely than larger, more resilient groups."

The group warned that the continued strength of sterling would continue to knock the group's profits. However Mr Long said the operating performance would improve in the second half and it should make a small operating profit for the year as a whole.

The strong pound hit margins in its Dutch, German and French businesses which cost the group around £300,000. Saltire is now looking to close its warehouses in continental Europe and dramatically reduce the stocks it holds.

Turnover in Network, the division supplying Romania, halved to £11m. The business lost £500,000 in the first half due to the weakening local currency and a downturn in the economy which led to poor demand and curtailed exports.

Sales at Maplin, the retail business Saltire bought 18 months ago, have also been disappointing. The performance of its mail order side has yet to live up to expectations. Mr Long said the group should survive its latest problems and the balance sheet was strong enough to support its operations.

ABP starts revamp to head off revolt

Andrew Yates

Associated British Ports, the UK's largest port operator, yesterday launched a root and branch strategic review in an attempt to boost its lacklustre profits growth. The move was designed to head off a revolt from institutional investors after a disappointing share price performance, which has seen ABP's shares underperform the stock market by 20 per cent over the last 12 months.

However, ABP disappointed shareholders by ruling out a share buy-back or special dividend, sending the shares down a further 17.5p to 275p.

One institution said: "This is not good enough. They had bet-

ter come up with something better in the review. The management are under pressure to perform."

Analysts believe that Sir Keith Stuart and Charles Orange, respectively ABP's chairman and finance director, could be forced to leave if the reforms end in failure. However, Sir Keith insisted the review would silence critics. "We are not resting on our laurels. We have bought in fresh blood. The process of renewal is already taking place," he said.

Andrew Smith, who joined the group in April to take control of the port operations, said ABP would consider overseas acquisitions and a diversification into other businesses.

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IN BRIEF

Llewellyn leaves Caradon board

Trefor Llewellyn is stepping down from the board of Caradon, the building materials group, in the wake of shareholder unhappiness over his connection with the Wickes scandal, which led to a slump in profits at the DIY retailer. Shares in Caradon fell 9p to 189.5p as analysts downgraded forecasts on news that profits at the group's doors and windows division would not recover until 1998. Pre-tax profits for the six months to June fell to £74m (£81.3m), with the rise in the strength of the pound and dilution from disposals wiping £12m off earnings. Caradon warned that British building materials market was only showing modest recovery and although improvement was seen ahead, its timing and strength were uncertain. The group sees continued stability in the tough German market, with a recovery by 1998.

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Williams says ACT abolition will cost £9m

Williams, the fire protection to security group, became one of the first companies to spell out the cost of the recent abolition of advance corporation tax credits when it said the move would result in an additional £9m a year in pension contributions. The group, which has a surplus on its pension fund, said it was still in discussion with its actuaries about the precise cost and the result would be reflected in the full-year results. News of the charge and the group's failure to announce either the sale of its Polyfills to US paints home improvements division or a share buy-back alongside its interim results, as some had expected, sent the shares 15.5p lower to 359p. After taking account of a £5.3m rationalisation charge, profits up 3 per cent to £11.8m in the six months to June were at the top end of expectations. The figures included a maiden contribution of £17.1m from Chubb, acquired for £1.3bn earlier this year.

Investment column, page 18

Unilever buys Argentine ice-cream firm

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch food and detergents giant, moved to enter Argentina's ice-cream market with the acquisition of Monteladino from Philip Morris. Monteladino, which has an annual turnover of approximately £29m and employs 350 people, is the second-largest ice-cream business in Argentina, the second-largest ice market in Latin America. The terms of the deal were not disclosed. Charles Strauss, president of Unilever's Latin American operations, said: "Latin America is a region with high growth potential for Unilever and ice-cream is a priority category."

Government redeems BT special share

The Government has redeemed its £1 special preference share in British Telecom, leaving it with no shareholding in the company. The Government announced in July that it had decided to redeem the special share, which was created in 1984 and prevented BT from changing certain Articles of Association without the written consent of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. The articles affected included limitations on shareholdings and the nationality of the executive chairman or chief executive officer. The move comes in the wake of BT's proposed merger with MCI, the US telecoms group.

Profits up 43% at France Telecom

France Telecom, Europe's second-largest telephone group, announced a 43 per cent rise in profits to Fr8.9bn (£927m) for the six months to June. The company made a one-off profit of Fr1.1bn from the sale of its 7.75 per cent stake in Cofira, a unit of telecommunications rival Cegetel. The profit growth comes as the government plans to sell 20 per cent of the company's shares on the Paris and New York stock markets in France's biggest initial public offering. The government will also sell shares to employees and is in talks to swap shares with Deutsche Telekom AG, its international partner. Operating income fell 1.1 per cent to Fr6.6bn as a result of investment costs related to expanding its mobile phone service. Rising mobile phone subscriptions and lower financing costs meant the company said it expected profits to rise above last year's Fr14.5bn.

No one can afford to ignore the 'speculators' - or have them shot

As the world's banking community converges on Hong Kong where the IMF and World Bank annual meetings start next week, both the bankers and the currency traders who work for them will be reflecting on how much more turmoil on the foreign exchange markets this year can bring. This is not just a question of the recent crisis affecting several Asian currencies, which prompted Malaysia's prime minister to say he thought speculators should be shot. Volatility in the exchange rates between major currencies like the dollar, yen, mark and pound has also been much higher this year than last.

It is not in the nature of central bankers to like volatility, although the investment bankers love it, of course, for the extra business and profit opportunities it brings. As last spring's G7 ministers' meeting put it in the official communiqué: "We agreed that exchange rates should reflect economic fundamentals and that excessive volatility and significant deviations from fundamentals are undesirable."

Therefore the financial markets will be a bit edgy about the meeting of G7 finance ministers and central bank governors due to take place in Hong Kong in just over a week's time. They will also be keeping a cautious eye on any smoke signals emerging from this weekend's meeting of European finance ministers, which is due to discuss the exchange rates at which member currencies will convert to the euro at the end of next year.

Given that those attending these two key policy meetings have a strong preference for exchange rates that do not move too far, too fast, and reflect underlying economic fundamentals, the markets will be speculating whether they might do anything about it. In April there was talk but no co-ordinated intervention and no change in policies. But two years earlier the G7 did manage to bring to reverse the dollar's earlier decline. Will the ministers walk their talk this time around?

Generally, action takes place only when the strains of misaligned currencies have become unbearable. Economists at Goldman Sachs have



Diane Coyle

America can no more disregard the currency markets than the Thais or Malaysians. Foreign exchange turnover, at more than \$1.2 trillion a day, is on too formidable a scale

helpfully just published a chunky document which gives their latest estimates for "equilibrium" exchange rates which would reflect fundamentals. They calculate that the dollar ought to be around \$1.50 to the mark in the long run, and the pound should be at DM2.49. The

equilibrium dollar-yen rate is \$119.95.

This means that at current rates, the dollar is substantially overvalued against the German mark, though much less so against the yen, while the pound is still overvalued despite its recent decline. Generally speaking, the mark is far too weak, the dollar and the pound too strong.

The first action G7 ministers and central banks always take is to try to talk their currencies down - or up - without having to intervene directly in the foreign exchange markets or do anything really drastic like alter interest rates or government budgets.

The talking has started. For example, the Bank of England successfully persuaded the currency markets that the pound should be lower with a statement last month that indicated interest rates were unlikely to rise again in the immediate future.

On Tuesday Lawrence Summers, the US Deputy Treasury Secretary, launched a verbal assault that took the dollar down more than two years in a day by saying the Japanese government must promote domestic demand, rather than relying on exports to haul the economy to recovery.

Other central banks have quietly stopped buying US Treasury bonds during the past four months. If private investors do not plug the emerging gap, the dollar is likely to fall. An increase in US interest rates would postpone this correction but interest rates are likely to in-

crease in Germany as well, and perhaps also in the UK eventually.

Besides, its growing trade deficit means America's appetite for foreign capital is huge. To finance its gap between imports and exports of around \$190bn (£120bn) this year it would have to soak up all the spare savings in the rest of the G7. To make matters worse, Japan and other Asian countries have bought about a third of the foreign purchases of Treasury bonds during the past two years. Recent events mean this supply of capital inflows will probably dry up.

As the Goldman Sachs experts point out: "In the past two years we have witnessed the swift acceleration of foreign capital inflows into the US Treasury market on record." If they slow down markedly - perhaps as a result of decisions taken or signals sent at the impending G7 meeting - either long-term yields in the US will have to rise or the dollar will have to set off on a downward path to provide overseas investors with a currency gain.

The real moral is that the American government can no more ignore the currency markets than the Thais or Malaysians. According to the latest international survey in 1995, daily foreign exchange turnover was \$1.2 trillion. Next year's update will show that it has grown even more. This is too formidable a scale for any government to tackle. All are subject to the market's disciplines, when the "speculators" get round to applying them.

Countries like the US with a big current account deficit are consuming more than they can produce at home - a trade shortfall is often the earlier sign of inflationary pressure. If, as seems to be the case in America at the moment, this is because of growing purchases of investment goods, it need not be a long-term problem. The investment will eventually increase home production. Even so, it will put the currency under pressure and in the end is likely to result in a depreciating dollar. If, as in the South-East Asian case, it is the result of consumer spending or unproductive government spending, the crunch will be rapid and painful.

How to hold on to your key staff - by Nicola Horlick

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Love her or loathe her, there's not much chance of ignoring Nicola Horlick, the woman who did for Morgan Grenfell Asset Management what Attila the Hun did for ancient Rome.

The Recruitment Society have just sent me an invitation to hear la Horlick, currently managing director of Société Générale Asset Management UK, give a speech later this month entitled: "Recruitment and Retention in the City."

Will anyone from Morgan Grenfell be in attendance, I wonder?

Terry Thomas is not entirely looking forward to his retirement after nine years as managing director of the Co-operative Bank. He tells me that his new job - in the House of Lords - only pays him a measly £30 a day for a secretary, with lousy facilities and no office of his own.

Attempting to lighten his mood, I enquired whether he would also have to supply his own crumme.

Bearing in mind the Co-op's aggressively "green" image, Mr Thomas admitted he would "have to find an ethically correct crumme".

He then speculated on where the Coldstream Guards get their synthetic beards from. Is there anyone out there who can help?

No sooner do I write that Sir Brian Pearce is about to retire from British Invisibles than he marches off to be the new deputy chairman of Britannic Assurance.

Britannic is best known as a rather boring company which sells policies to C2Ds and collects their premiums door to door. Sources at Britannic tell me this is all going to change, and that a bright chap like Sir Brian wouldn't have taken the job otherwise. His joining "is a signal that he understands and is excited by potential Britannic has in the market".

Over the last year the company has gained an entirely new top team, including Harold Cottam as chairman. Last February it made a deal with the DTI over the



Nicola Horlick: Giving a speech for the Recruitment Society

ownership of its "orphan assets" and the share price has moved ahead. Now Sir Brian, a former boss at Barclays and Midland, will be cut out from the company. Stand by for lift off. Or something like that.

Personally I would have thought Sir Brian was ready to start cultivating roses and improving his handicap after such a long and successful career, but his appetite for business seems undimmed. He's still chairman of LucasVarity as well.

Coincidentally, Mr Cottam is retiring as chairman of the Haden MacLellan engineering group, to make way for Roger Leverton.

It was Mr Leverton, you may recall, who was forced to carry the can for Pilkington's troubles when he headed the glass maker. Let's hope he has better luck this time.

Keith Vaz is at it again. Baiting BCCI's liquidators, that is. No sooner have the boys from Deloitte & Touche won a \$2.1bn judgment for damages in the Cayman Islands courts against Chait Pharoan, a Saudi financier connected to BCCI, than the MP for Leicester is demanding all the

money be paid over immediately to the crashed bank's creditors.

Mr Vaz arranged what was to have been a private meeting yesterday with Chris Morris and John Richards, UK-based liquidators from Deloitte & Touche. In the event the MP turned up with a platoon of photographers at the liquidators' offices in Fetter Lane, London.

The liquidators agreed to look at his proposal for a public meeting at which creditors could ask questions directly. It is after all five years since the last public meeting, and seven years since the corrupt bank was shut down.

Mr Morris and Mr Richards rejected another of Mr Vaz's proposals - that they drop their legal suits against Price Waterhouse, BCCI's former auditors, and the Bank of England, one of its regulators. Mr Vaz suggested that since they already had \$2.1bn coming from Mr Pharoan, fighting the other legal cases was a waste of money. But the Touche boys reckon they can still win compensation for creditors from the two institutions. Whatever happens, the liquidators are certainly painfully aware that their fees are under scrutiny. Perhaps that's why they are about to move to new offices - above McDonald's in Holborn.

Trefor Llewellyn has asked to be moved to an operational role at Caradon and is therefore leaving the board and giving up his current job of finance director. Caradon sources assure me this has nothing to do with shareholder disquiet over Mr Llewellyn's previous job as finance director of Wickes, the building materials group which suffered a £50m accounting glitch last year. Mr Llewellyn, after all, arrived at Caradon two years ago, I'm told.

Mr Llewellyn will become corporate development director in charge of acquisitions and disposals. He will be replaced by Martin Clarke, who is coming in from Associated British Foods.

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	158.85	22.20	51.58	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Canada	23.80	71.86	203.20	138.44	35.31	89.88	100.00
Germany	23.80	71.86	203.20	138.44	35.31	89.88	100.00
France	9.04	34.20	92.80	60.84	16.10	35.34	100.00
Italy	27.00	102.14	16.07	175.89	45.40	96.59	100.00
Japan	163.00	104.10	304.02	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
UK	145.75	35.31	105.01	108.84	14.45	46.47	100.00
Belgium	36.02	21.35	59.31	37.20	79.74	224.24	100.00
Netherlands	10.85	34.10	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sweden	3.70	106.58	316.30	212.33	43.48	128.97	100.00
Denmark	10.85	34.10	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Spain	24.05	37.26	105.97	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Switzerland	32.02	35.34	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Australia	2.50	104.10	304.02	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
South Africa	2.75	35.34	105.97	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Hong Kong	46.50	34.51	102.14	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	24.05	37.26	105.97	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Saudi Arabia	5.00	104.10	304.02	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Other	2.50	104.10	304.02	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
Argentina	13.85	0.89	0.89	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Brazil	20.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
China	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
India	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Indonesia	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Philippines	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
South Korea	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Taiwan	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Thailand	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
USA	10.00	1.00	1.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Forward rates quoted low to high are at a discount; subtract from spot rate. Rate quoted low to high are at a premium; add to spot rate.

Rate quoted as an average.

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0911 123 3033.

Cable cost 50p per minute.

Interest Rates

	D-Mark		
Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot
—	—	—	0.5551
32-31	39-38	39-38	0.7684
14	32-38	32-38	1.0000
16	16-16	353-349	3.3625
17	17-17	465-460	976-928
19	52-51	45-47	688-683
20	75-74	42-41	0.5100
21	75-74	222-220	216-233
22	107-105	307-325	3.6638
23	107-105	307-325	1.6224
24	8-7	10-5	0.3714
25	14-12	438-439	4.1208
26	27-24	—	84-374
27	83-88	298-279	0.4240
28	24-23	61-58	1.3927
29	5-5	7-5	0.7222
30	40-50	32-15	4.2382
31	7-9	30-33	1.6234
32	10-10	5-9	0.6130
33	19-16	35-33	2.0519
34	—	—	0.8271

sport

The notion that games are not necessarily fun is pathetic and, sadly, a feature of vicarious parental involvement

It is not often these days that you come across anyone in sport who appears to find it even remotely amusing. I'm all for concentrating fully on the job but not entirely at the expense of light-hearted reflection.

One result of media-driven tension is that smiling on the fields of play has gone out of fashion. When it isn't fiscal the language of sport is the language of urgency - "big games" or "important games" or, heaven help us, "must-win games".

The funniest anecdotes in sport are to be found in history, in the lore of cricket, football, rugby and golf, any game you care to mention, because levity no longer figures on the agenda.

Awareness of this made the attitude adopted by Steve Jones when in contention for the Canadian Open golf championship last week-end all the more commendable and appealing.

At a critical stage of proceedings Jones knew that he had probably given up two strokes to Greg Norman with the sort of shot that causes hackers to think seriously about dumping their clubs into the nearest garbage can. No tantrum followed. Jones just laughed and cracked a joke with his caddy.

After beating Norman by one shot to secure his first tournament victory since January, the former US Open champion - who failed to make the Ryder Cup team when he dropped to 12th place in the

rankings - said: "I was in a good position but you learn when you mess up. I put a lot of pressure on myself. I know that now. Sometimes you need to loosen up, have a little fun no matter what you are shooting. That was proven for me this week."

One of the most important things ever said about sport is attributed to another golfer, the great Walter Hagen, who did more than anyone in his game to raise the status of professionals. Pause and smell the roses is more or less what Hagen was said to go around saying.

Some time ago I referred in this column to a Canadian golfer, George Knudson, who was pretty good at the game but discovered



KEN JONES

that he could not handle winning. "I was wrapped up in golf 24 hours a day, total concentration and that wasn't me," he said. "I said to myself, I surrender. If this is what it takes to win, I'm not out for it. Maybe you have to be

very bright or dumb to win. I'm in between."

Knudson decided that if he could not be as strong and as intelligent on the course as Jack Nicklaus, or as dedicated as Gary Player, you might as well relax and enjoy it. If you can't beat it, don't let it beat you. Check the flora and the fauna. Go home to the kids. Ski.

Ambition, temperament and the urge to make a lot of money comes into this but any number of people in sport today convey the impression that they would be dead to Hagen's philosophy. Frimmed by coaches and the media, all that occurs to them is winning.

The Football Association's director of coaching, Howard Wilkin-

son, recently touched on this when taking charge of England's Under-18 team. "We must ensure that youngsters learn how to play before they learn about winning," he said. Ted Bates said something similar many years ago when manager of Southampton, but unfortunately nothing came of it.

The notion that games aren't necessarily fun is pathetic and, sadly, a feature of vicarious parental involvement. I am on the dangerous ground of amateur psychiatry here, but a belief held personally is that children should be brought up to enjoy whatever talent for sport they have been born with.

It is conceivable that, but for the explosion in tele-communications,

sports performers would not now be taking themselves so seriously. The innumerable explosions of hot air in newspapers has something to do with this too.

We have already gone far in preparing for the kind of future in sport that many people think inevitable. It gives an aching urgency to thoughts on how a sense of humour and perspective can be reinstated.

It is absurd to expect those who earn a living at a game to have the same nonchalant attitude as those who could once afford to compete as amateurs. Times have long since changed but, as Steve Jones proved in Montreal last week, there is still something to be gained from a smile in the face of adversity.

Kent defied by the two Darrens

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Headingley
Yorkshire 312
Kent 79-1

Darren Gough's love of the dramatic has always been one of his many assets. Unfortunately for Kent, the County Championship leaders, he chose yesterday to make another grand gesture, this time with the bat, by scoring a flamboyant half-century, as he and Darren Lehmann, who scored 87, added 117 runs in 19 overs for the seventh wicket.

With runs coming at six an over, it was an extraordinary stand by the two Darrens. Right from the outset, when Gough tried to launch his first ball into the Western terrace, it was a partnership defined by a severe contrast of styles. With Lehmann's assured strokeplay being offset by the fast bowler's muscular thrashing and pulling.

Coming in when his team were balking on 137 for 6 - only the captain David Byas with 50 got a start - it was Gough's highest score of the season, surpassing the 34 he made against Durham. As an irritant, it was

about as welcome as a blighted hop crop, and it could still happen that supporters of Glamorgan or Yorkshire could end the season being more grateful than those from Kent, should the visitors fail to get on terms later today.

Lehmann, as he has done all season, played with a superb sense of duty. He has rid himself of the youthful and sometimes ill-tempered impetuosity of his youth and replaced it with something far more solid and unflappable.

Like all the best batsmen however, the South Australian has an uncanny ability to find the gaps, and yesterday anything hit with power rarely encountered a fielder. Judging from comments that have been circulating around Headingley all season, he is better regarded and more popular than Michael Bevan, and Lehmann returns as Yorkshire's overseas player next season.

On a sluggish, mottled pitch with enough in it for play to alternate between periods of run-scoring and rapid bursts of wickets, Kent had their chances of controlling the match and making light of losing what may prove to be an important toss as the pitch wears.

Unable to field either of

their fast bowlers, Martin McCague and Ben Phillips, suffering from a back strain and shin soreness respectively, Kent were forced to call up Alan Jaggesden for only his fourth Championship match of the season.

Cricket may be perceived as slow moving, but in terms of career prospects the game can move quickly. Four years ago, Jaggesden toured the West Indies with England. Yesterday, he took 4 for 67, a spell that included the chance of a hat-trick, after he had removed Craig White and Bradley Parker with successive balls. He was also the man who got the match rolling when he had Tony McGrath lbw in the fourth over of the day.

But if Jaggesden's performance was an unexpected boon, Kent, despite picking up maximum bowling points, will be kicking themselves for not making a better fist of bowling Yorkshire out for less than 312. According to the fielding side, however, a heavy dew made the ball go soft quickly, and it was certainly noticeable that when Strang came on in the 10th over, he needed to dry the ball after almost every delivery.

Wet ball aside, only Mark Ealham, as he often was with



Yorkshire's Michael Vaughan on the attack against Kent at Headingley

Photograph: Michael Steele/Empics

England, was immune from criticism, as Dean Headley and Paul Strang conceded runs at an alarming rate. Indeed it was Ealham who took all the important wickets, removing both Gough

and Lehmann, the latter to a well disguised bouncer that surprised the Australian who gently paddled it to the keeper, Steve Marsh.

Mind you, Marsh would have

probably settled for Kent to negotiate the tricky 17 overs at the end of the day for the loss of one wicket. Having seen off the new ball, Ed Smith, a Cambridge undergraduate and

sweet timer, drove Chris Silverwood loosely to gully. If such unforced errors can be avoided when Kent bat today, they may yet get another chance to dominate this match.

Atherton leaves his cares behind

HENRY BLOFIELD

reports from The Oval
Lancashire 459-4
v Surrey

For whatever reason, Michael Atherton was a changed man. His stroke play was crisp and decisive, his judgement good, his footwork excellent and at long last he managed to turn batting back into a sideways-on art. When he was caught behind seven overs before tea, he had made 149, by some distance his best score of the season.

It may have been because a couple of Hollies apart, there was not an Australian in sight. Or perhaps it was the product of an untroubled mind with all difficult decisions behind him, but certainly Surrey's bowling, the worst I have seen from a county this season, gave more than just a helping hand.

Gone, and one can only pray that it is forever, was the shuffling, slightly myopic looking figure of most of the summer who finished every stroke on the back foot squared up with his toes pointing at the bowler like a French cricketer. Let us hope that the memory of his innings will stay with him in the West Indies.

Surrey were without Chris Lewis - he had found a niggling hip this time: Saqlain Mushtaq has gone to Toronto to play against India in the Sahara Cup; and Graham Thorpe, whose bowling might just have come in handy, was having a rest. Apart from a tidy opening spell by Martin Bicknell, those who were left to bowl for Surrey - in all, 10 were used - served up helping after helping of unmitigated codswallop.

After an early snick through the slips, Atherton began to play his strokes as he all too seldom trusts himself to do. Drives, hooks, strokes off his legs and square cuts echoed round the ground.

His left-handed partner, Nathan Wood, the son of Barry of England, Lancashire and Derbyshire, played in a rather less compelling manner but he has impressive, tenacious qualities and helped him add 259 for the first wicket, a record for Lancashire since 1930.

Wood missed three times and held on to reach his first hundred which is such an important landmark. Atherton faced 98 balls and hit 30 fours and 25 sixes before being brilliantly caught far down the leg-side by Alec Stewart. John Crawley batted delightfully before the left-arm spinner, Rupesh Amin, turned one more than he expected. Then, just before the end, Wood slashed to backward point after helping himself to 20 fours and facing 316 balls.

Cowan injured as Glamorgan thrive

DAVID LLEWELLYN

reports from Cardiff
Glamorgan 307-7 v Essex

There were confusing goings-on here yesterday. England's Caribbean tour party suffered its first casualty barely 24 hours after the squad had been named. Ashley Cowan, Essex's promising fast bowler, was forced out of the Essex attack in the Championship match against Glamorgan after he had bowled just a handful of overs.

According to the 22-year-

old Cowan, he aggravated an injury in his right shoulder while bowling the second of a four-over stint, in which he conceded just 10 runs. But it was not until he had been smashed for 16 runs by Hugh Morris when he came on to start a second spell, shortly before lunch, that Cowan decided he could not continue bowling.

Cowan said: "It's the same problem I had against Northamptonshire. The selectors know about it. I am going to see a specialist. It's the worst I've felt. I have already had X-rays and the medical experts say it is stress related. Rest should

put it right and there is no problem for the winter tour."

Early reports stated Cowan was out of the match, but he later took the field, suggesting Essex were leaving open their option to employ him as a bowler later in the innings, if the injury allows. Whether Cowan makes the West Indies depends on exploratory surgery on the joint, an operation he will undergo shortly.

In fact Cowan's withdrawal from the attack was probably just as well, as at least he was spared further exposure to Glamorgan's batsmen who, while not making dramatic

progress, certainly encountered few problems as they set about acquiring the bonus points they need to sustain their Championship challenge. They may miss out, but a pitch that is already taking turn could offer even less to Essex.

There was an immediate hiccup. Steve James has topped the batting averages all summer, but he was sharply taken, in the fifth over of the day, by Darren Robinson at short leg. He had made two. But there were still a couple of century partnerships and Morris, and later Matthew Maynard, proved more difficult to budge.

Morris in fact batted himself out of a lean spell. He had a hundred within his grasp, having rounded his boundary count up to a dozen when he fell bow to the left-arm swing of Mark Lloyd. By then he had shared in a second-wicket stand of 138 with Adrian Dale.

Then it was the turn of captain Maynard. Typically for a man in form, little escaped the middle of his bat, but he did have a let-off, missed at mid-wicket on 60. Perhaps that unsettled him because, not long afterwards, Maynard went, rather tamely, caught and bowled by Danny Law.

Gloucestershire are made to suffer

MIKE CAREY

reports from Edgbaston
Warwickshire 407-7
v Gloucestershire

Whatever the rest of the season has to offer them, Warwickshire have clearly decided to see it out in a blaze of stroke-play. They did so in the first and final sessions yesterday and Neil Smith's robust hundred, supported by half-centuries from Nick Knight, David Hemp and Dougie Brown, enabled them to make the most of winning the toss.

The pitch, though having no great pace, was better than many seen here this season. But if the sun continues to shine it will be no surprise if Warwickshire prove to have had the best of it and, as ever, the extra pace of Allan Donald will be a crucial factor.

The news that Courtney Walsh will be returning to Gloucestershire next season emerged as Knight and Hemp were giving their current attack some rough handling during a pre-lunch session in which the rub of the green stubbornly refused to go the way of the fielding side.

Half-chances either failed to

stick or did not quite go to hand. Among a number of frustrating episodes, the most vital probably came before Hemp had scored when Jonathan Lewis beat him with an excellent yorker but was denied an lbw decision because the ball pitched marginally outside leg stump.

After that Hemp showed there was no margin for error on this pitch: his fifty, from 53 balls, included 46 in boundaries. If much of Gloucestershire's efforts tended to reflect David Graveney's concern about the overall quality of English bowling, Hemp's innings suggested there is no shortage of batting talent.

Things changed later when a tight spell by Lewis induced a number of errors. Knight falling to a good catch by Dominic Hewson and Hemp to a ball angled across him and perhaps bouncing more than most.

Lewis and company bowled with great heart, as teams do when they are taking wickets, but the ball was growing old and the bowlers weary and Smith took them apart savagely, showing yet again his great strength when given room outside the off-stump. His century came from 112 balls with 17 fours and a six.

Moody takes Derbyshire apart

Derbyshire's captain, Tim Moody led the way with 101 out of his side's 400 for 4 against Derbyshire at New Road yesterday. Moody made 74 of his 131-ball century in boundaries, allowing Philip Weston (145no) to play more sedately and reach his century in 228 balls, with 10 fours and a six. David Leathardale then added 63 not out for his part in a continuing fifth-wicket stand of 120 with Weston.

At Northampton, the hosts had Tony Penberthy (63) and

David Ripley (92) to thank for taking them towards 310 for 7 against their neighbours Leicestershire. The sixth-wicket pair put on 155 in all, after coming together at 105 for 5.

Jason Pooley fell just two runs short of his century as Middlesex took charge against Nottinghamshire at Lord's. Their captain Mark Ramprakash made 55, and the hosts finished the day on 283 for 5.

Somerset restricted Durham to 230 all out at Chester-le-Street, despite 79 from John

Morris, and then responded with 75 for 1.

On a day that saw five individual centuries struck around the country, bottom-of-the-table Sussex mustered just 114 between them against Hampshire at Southampton. Stuart Milburn took 4 for 38, and the former England off-spinner Shaun Udal 4 for 17. Hampshire ended the day on 185 for 2, with Giles White and Paul Whitaker (both 68no) enjoying an unbroken third-wicket stand of 114.

Allan Border, the former Australia Test captain, has been appointed as the under-19 national team coach for next year's Youth World Cup in South Africa, the Australian Cricket Board announced yesterday.

Border, who played a record 156 Tests for his country before retiring from the international arena in 1994, will take charge of a 21-member squad, which will start as one of the favourites for the tournament.

The ACB's chief executive of-

ficer, Malcolm Speed, said in a statement that Border will be assisted by two other former Test players, the outstanding fast bowler Dennis Lillee and Rodney Marsh, Australia's wicket-keeper from the same era as Lillee.

The four-week Youth World Cup will take place in January and February next year.

Border retired from first-class cricket in March 1996 after a lengthy career with Queensland in the domestic Sheffield Shield.

SCOREBOARD

Britannia Assurance County Championship

First day of four: Today 11.00

Durham v Somerset

CRICKETERS: Somerset (Aptel) trail Durham by 155 runs with nine first-innings wickets standing.

Durham won toss.

Durham - First innings

J B Lums c Turner b Cadock 0

S J Morris b Lums 0

J E Morris b Lums 0

R D Bosc c Turner b Rose 15

M P Spongist not out 16

R M Foster b Lums 29

M M Bristow not out 29

J Bosc c Turner b Rose 11

S J E Brown c Turner b Mustard 17

A Walker not out 21

P O Lister not out 21

M M Bristow not out 29

M M Lister not out 29

Extras (lb, w) 28

Total (for 2, 27 overs) 155

1st Innings: 155 (27 overs)

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1st Innings: 155 (27 overs)

Sussex won toss

Sussex - First innings

M T E Pierce c Morgan b Milburn 7

*P Moore c Ayres b Remshaw 0

N R Taylor b Milburn 0

K Greenfield b Lums 17

K Newell c Lums b Milburn 4

J R Carpenter b Lums 22

P W James c Hayden b Lums 22

J J Bates b Milburn 16

A A Khan b Lums 16

M A Robinson not out 6

R C Pooley c Remshaw b Lums 17

Extras (lb, w) 13

Total (for 2, 27 overs) 155

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Gloucestershire won toss

Gloucestershire - First innings

A Fordham c Nason b Omond 32

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

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R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

Warwickshire won toss

Warwickshire - First innings

A Fordham c Nason b Omond 32

R R Montgomerie b Omond 19

R

